

*MEISISI ENKAI!*  
CLAIMING CULTURAL IDENTITY  
IN MAASAI CHRISTIAN WORSHIP  
IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

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ON THE WAR PATH IN MASAI LAND.

Frontispiece.



## ABSTRACT

### *MEISISI ENKAI!* CLAIMING CULTURAL IDENTITY IN MAASAI CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

This study seeks to answer the research question, To what extent and in what ways has the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) taken into account the distinctives of Maasai culture? In order to answer this question, both library investigation of Maasai culture and Presbyterian history among them and field work research in the PCEA Olchoronyori, Injashat, and Ewuaso mission areas were undertaken.

The study provides a background history of the PCEA from its Scottish Presbyterian roots beginning at Kibwezi in 1891 through African denominational autonomy in 1956 and continued 20<sup>th</sup> century Presbyterian outreach efforts among the Maasai. Of special emphasis is the work of the historic Kikuyu mission station and its influence on Maasai people. This study also details Maasai culture in both historic and contemporary contexts as it relates to the topic of Christian worship and worship leader training. Extensive use of historic mission photography as well as current images provide primary source material.

In addition, a field study was undertaken involving worship observations in thirty-five PCEA congregations in Kenya. At each church, administration of a survey instrument to ascertain attitudes toward worship practice took place. In many of the PCEA Maasai congregations in the study area, one finds western liturgy, hymnody, and formal clergy and worship leader practices. Photography from each

site and interviews with the PCEA evangelist assigned to these churches assist in providing a convergence of resources showing the extent of western Presbyterian influence on Maasai Christian worship and the opportunities for and levels of Maasai worship leader training. At the conclusion of the field work endeavor, a focus group debriefing facilitated the clarifying of current issues in Maasai worship and worship leader development.

By tracing the Presbyterian Church's work with the Maasai people and analyzing the gathered data pertaining to the study area, this thesis shows that Presbyterian work among the Maasai in the areas of worship and worship leader training has not adequately taken into account the cultural distinctives of the Maasai people. Furthermore, this inadequacy has led to friction, alienation, and the possibility of schism. As a reaction, some Maasai churches in the study area are now beginning to assert more demonstratively their unique cultural heritage by incorporating elements of Maasai expression into service of Christian worship. The study concludes that indigenous cultural models are providing new insight into Christian worship leader training and new emphasis for claiming cultural distinctives in Maasai Christian worship.

## DECLARATION

I declare this thesis is entirely my own work and based on my own research. All direct quotations and indirect references are properly acknowledged in footnotes and bibliography.

Fred Foy Strang

October 2003

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank my supervisor, Dr. T. Jack Thompson, for his invaluable assistance throughout this project, especially for his encouragement of my photographic interests. Also, much thanks to Professor David Kerr, Anne Fernon, and Margaret Acton of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non Western World for their willingness to assist me in research, writing, and administrative issues. Thank you, Drs. Samuel Moffett and Andrew Walls, for encouraging this endeavor many years ago at the Overseas Ministries Study Center.

A project of this magnitude would not have been possible without significant financial assistance. I would like to thank the members of The Community Church of Vero Beach, Florida for providing the bulk of our family's Scotland residency expenses. Also, I am grateful to members of the First Presbyterian Church of Vero Beach, Florida for helping to sponsor some of the work conducted in Africa and providing the flexibility in my parish schedule for research and writing. With much gratitude, I acknowledge the Maasai Special Projects Fund, Inc. (MSPF) who provided the funds to cover the expenses of the field work and follow up visitation in Kenya. I am thankful to both these churches, to the MSPF board, and to families and friends who surround us with prayer in all our sojourns.

Without my brothers and sisters in the Lord in Africa, none of this would have come to fruition. I am especially thankful for the partnership of Benson Ole Kurraru, Moses Sinet Pulei, Stephen Mparinkoi, and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) evangelists at work in the study area. In addition, I greatly appreciate the willingness of the PCEA and the thirty-five congregations in the study area to allow me access to their sacred space and practice. Furthermore, Jack Beuttell, my American research assistant, I thank you for your company and willingness to tackle any task.

Finally, a special thank you to my family, Cecily, Jesse, and Jacob, for your constant support and encouragement. I am especially grateful to Cecily for the countless hours of reading, correcting, and editing.

*Ashe Oleng! Ashe tEnkai!* (Thank you very much! Thanks be to God!)

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October 2003

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## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE DISSERTATION

#### Introduction

*Meisisi Enkai!* (Praise God!) — A statement of adoration of God used by Maasai Christians to express their exuberance in worship characterizes the fervent passion with which Maasai men, women, and children approach their faith in Jesus Christ. This is not surprising, as rich tradition and vital ceremony are part of the lives of the Maasai people. These nomadic herds-people of East Africa sing, dance, tell stories, and practice intricate and emotional rites as part of their traditional, cultural heritage. The Maasai pride themselves in their enduring and vibrant cultural history. Working in Christian mission in the region, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) has congregations among the Maasai. One would naturally expect to see a continuation of Maasai cultural vitality in Christian worship, however, when one enters a PCEA Maasai church, one often finds a western liturgy with western hymnody and formal clergy and worship leader practices. Furthermore, initial findings from limited previous research indicate that a majority of Maasai churches in the PCEA have laity leading worship who have little or no training.

This study seeks to ascertain what actually are the practices of Christian worship in Kenya's PCEA Maasai churches in the mission areas of the *Ewuaso Kedong* Valley and who act as the worship leaders in these churches. In addition, this study seeks to determine attitudes of these leaders and PCEA Maasai

churchgoers toward the practice of Christian worship they experience in relation to their culture looking at sources of these attitudes and actions. Finally, this study examines the availability and extent of worship leader training in the PCEA Maasai churches and seeks to interface Maasai Christian's perceived views of worship with culturally appropriate practices and training methods for future worship leaders.

### *Statement of the Problem*

During my initial work among Maasai people in Kenya in 1982, I visited East Africa's Presbyterian ecclesiastical bastion, St. Andrew's Kirk in Nairobi. There I found a liturgy and worship style practically identical to that of my western Presbyterian experience. Complete with a printed bulletin, a pipe organ, a robed choir singing western classical music, western congregation hymnody, and clergy robed with tab collars delivering a three-point sermon, the English language service of worship could have been transported to any Scottish or American Presbyterian congregation without alteration.

The following week, I began my stay and work with an American Presbyterian missionary family working with the Maasai. Looking forward to a distinctly African worship experience among the Maasai, I again was surprised to find in Maasai Presbyterian congregations a remarkably similar service. While many were in traditional Maasai dress and a drum replaced the pipe organ, the liturgy, hymnody, and overall expression was a near replica of western Presbyterian worship.

William Anderson, commenting on the church in East Africa states, "The aspect of church life which touches the ordinary Christian most closely is worship; however, the churches of East Africa show signs that their worship is not yet tailored



to Africa's needs.”<sup>1</sup> It is widely recognized that Maasai people for various reasons have been latecomers to the modernization of East Africa.<sup>2</sup> In the midst of this insulation, however, it appears that patterns of Presbyterian worship in Maasai churches have largely followed the lead of 19<sup>th</sup> century missionaries.<sup>3</sup> Adrian Hastings points out that “there can be no question but that Europeans in general and European missionaries in particular, with few exceptions, admitted little if any culture of value in Africa.”<sup>4</sup> The comments by both Anderson and Hastings are particularly applicable to the nineteenth century when Scottish Presbyterians were establishing the Kikuyu Mission Station. Given this bias, the introduction of western worship forms took place in many situations with little understanding or subsequent appreciation of indigenous cultures of the African continent. With this problem in mind, my research will show that this has been the case in Maasai Presbyterian worship; and through observation, interview, and analysis, I ascertain what Maasai church leaders are considering and some of them actually doing to make their churches more authentically Maasai.

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<sup>1</sup>William Anderson, *The Church in East Africa: 1840-1974* (Nairobi: Uzima, 1977), 175.

<sup>2</sup>Tepilit Ole Saitoti, *Maasai* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1980), 23-24.

<sup>3</sup>In Chapter Three of this thesis, I detail Presbyterian missionary efforts through the historic Kikuyu Mission Station and show how patterns of western worship came into Maasai Christian expression.

<sup>4</sup>Adrian Hastings, *African Christianity* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976), 37.

### Research Question

The overarching research question addressed in this thesis is:

- To what extent and in what ways has the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa taken into account the distinctives of Maasai culture?

This question considers past history, present reality and future possibility of Maasai Christian worship and culturally sensitive worship leader development. Also addressed in the progression of the text are several other generative questions that arise from and augment this main research question in the context of their contribution to the understanding of the overarching question.

### Thesis Scope

This thesis follows a very simple, yet logical, pattern.<sup>5</sup> This initial chapter, **Chapter One**, provides a brief introduction to the subject of Maasai Christian worship, presents the purpose of the study, gives a brief summary of the problem which precipitated the study, and defines the main research question, listing the limitations of the research. Instead of a glossary, definition of terms will be dealt with throughout the text.

**Chapter Two**, “Maasai Culture and Religion,” delves into Maasai culture offering the reader, especially those unfamiliar with this people, a succinct summary of important, distinctive historical and cultural factors. It is important to distinguish between the historical and the contemporary in order to define “Maasai culture” in

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<sup>5</sup>After an extended period of research in Edinburgh and two field work trips to East Africa, the base for writing this thesis has been in the United States of America using a U.S. language keyboard. Therefore, U.S. language conventions are used throughout this project.

both its historical position and present day reality. To facilitate this, historical Maasai culture, changing Maasai culture, and contemporary Maasai culture will be considered. An explanation of certain Maasai rites and ceremonies that relate and may be applicable to the current practice of Christian worship and worship leader training will be given. For those interested in further research, there are a number of bibliographic references on Maasai culture.

In **Chapter Three**, “Maasai Christianity and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa,” the focus narrows by discussing the subject of this denomination’s work among Maasai people in Kenya. The expansion of Christianity among the Maasai, the specific influence of the Presbyterian Kikuyu Mission Station on Maasai Christianity, and the relational dynamics of the PCEA and Maasai Christians are discussed. This chapter concludes by looking at the recent history of PCEA Maasai work in Kenya, parish divisions, and subsequent mission area assignments.

**Chapter Four**, “Maasai Christian Worship and the Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal Method,” explains the approach used in conducting the field research for this study. Also included in this chapter is a further explanation of the rationale behind this research and why it is important to both the academic and ecclesiastical communities. This chapter concludes with additional validation of the case study and Participatory Rapid/Rural Appraisal (PRA) research methodologies for this study and gives an account of the actual occurrence of the field work.

**Chapter Five**, “Analysis of the Maasai Worship Case Study in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa,” is an analytical presentation of the data resulting from the field research. This chapter presents the results of the extensive Participatory Rapid/Rural Appraisal (PRA) conducted in all the PCEA Maasai

churches in the three mission areas formerly considered *Olooseos* Parish. The utilization of a convergence of materials, including the PRA survey and interview data, as well as photographic and recorded musical documentation for the thirty-five congregations that make up the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* mission areas, assists in probing the research question. This research data and commentary throughout the chapter allows conclusions addressing the main research question of this thesis.

The work in **Chapter Six**, “Implications of the Maasai Worship Case Study,” draws conclusions based on the field work for PCEA Maasai worship and Maasai worship leader development. Consideration is given to the growing separation of PCEA Maasai churches in the study area from the denomination as a whole. Growing out of the research, paradigm changes in areas of appropriate Christian leadership selection and training are discussed with the exploration of a traditional Maasai cultural model as a basis for Christian worship leader training and how this model is similar to some of the methodology used in Theological Education by Extension (TEE).<sup>6</sup> Finally, dress, liturgy, music and dance are reviewed in light of the unique Maasai cultural context. The thesis concludes with a consideration of the future place of worship in Maasai Christianity expressed in PCEA congregations. Throughout this thesis, historic and current mission photography as well as recordings of Maasai worship music and photographs obtained in field work and research are used as primary source material. The use of musical recordings as primary source material is well founded. Anthropologists and,

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<sup>6</sup>See Ross Kinsler, ed., *Ministry by the People: Theological Education by Extension* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983).

more recently, ethnomusicologists have used music recordings to study the social fabric of people groups throughout the world.<sup>7</sup> I reason that mission photography is a valid primary source as it provides a tangible historic record easily reviewed by interested students and scholars. With the advent of digital imaging and compact disc technology enormous amounts of data stored on a disc can easily be submitted to support a written thesis text. As an advocate of mission photography as a primary source for this thesis, mission historian, T. Jack Thompson, of New College, University of Edinburgh, is cited whose recent book, *Touching the Heart: Xhosa Missionaries to Malawi, 1876-1888*, breaks ground in this area and passes the muster of academic scrutiny.<sup>8</sup> Convergence of various sources of evidence is a key to the validation of a hypothesis or the answering of research questions in case study research.<sup>9</sup> While describing some sound recordings in the text as applicable to this study, these recordings of Maasai worship and traditional songs are on the accompanying compact disc. Still photographs and video clips of Maasai Christian worship are included on this compact disc as well. These additional materials allow

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<sup>7</sup>For an excellent review of the field of ethnomusicology and its implication to anthropological study, see Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983). For examples of the importance of ethnomusicology to the examination of Christian practices see Roberta King, "The Role of Music in Theological Education," *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1990), 35-41, and Paul Neeley, "Noted Ministry," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1999), 136-161.

<sup>8</sup>T. Jack Thompson, *Touching the Heart: Xhosa Missionaries to Malawi, 1876-1888* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2000). See review: Kenneth Ross, "Review: Touching the Heart: Xhosa Missionaries to Malawi, 1876-1888 by T. Jack Thompson," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol. 26, no. 3 (July 2002), 142.

<sup>9</sup>Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 78-100.

the student and researcher to explore further and draw conclusions in areas other than the topic at hand. The reader may find a listing of the contents of this media in the appendix and embedded on the disc itself (See Appendix 1).

### Delimitations

M.A.C. Warren warns in the excellent introduction to John Taylor's *The Primal Vision*, "Africa is a vast continent and all generalizations about Africa and Africans must be suspect."<sup>10</sup> With this thought in mind, I caution that the results of this research derive from a study of a very specific population group in a very defined geographic area. Because of these limitations, the outcome of this study may only be applied to PCEA churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* mission areas near the *Ngong Hills* and stretching westward into the *Ewuaso Kedong Valley* of Kenya, East Africa. In addition, readers should consider that my family served as Presbyterian missionaries with the Maasai. In 1982, I spent a summer in villages at the foot of the *Ngong Hills* as a Presbyterian mission volunteer. Subsequently, my family lived at both the MRDC and in the Maasai village of *Olosho-oibor* during 1988 and 1989. Since that time, I have been involved in Maasai Christian leadership development making regular mission trips to East Africa under the auspices of the Maasai Special Projects Fund, Inc., an American-based, para-church mission organization.<sup>11</sup> While I make every effort to be

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<sup>10</sup>M.A.C. Warren in John Taylor, *The Primal Vision* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1963), 12.

<sup>11</sup>The website for the Maasai Special Projects Fund, Inc. may be viewed at [www.mspfonline.org](http://www.mspfonline.org).

objective in both research and reporting, I acknowledge my personal Christian ministry involvement with Maasai people. Readers may certainly draw inferences other than those I make, but these limitations should be kept in mind.

This being said, I do assert my long-standing involvement with the Maasai as a positive factor in understanding this topic and write with as much authority on the subject as an outsider can. From living in a Maasai village to having a Maasai student live in our home, from long walks through the bush with Maasai men to attendance at numerous Maasai rites and ceremonies, from incredible experiences of friendship with special Maasai people to persecution and harassment for being their advocate in church and government concerns, my twenty-one years of involvement with Maasai people provides a unique perspective.

### *Purpose and Justification of the Study*

#### *Early European Record*

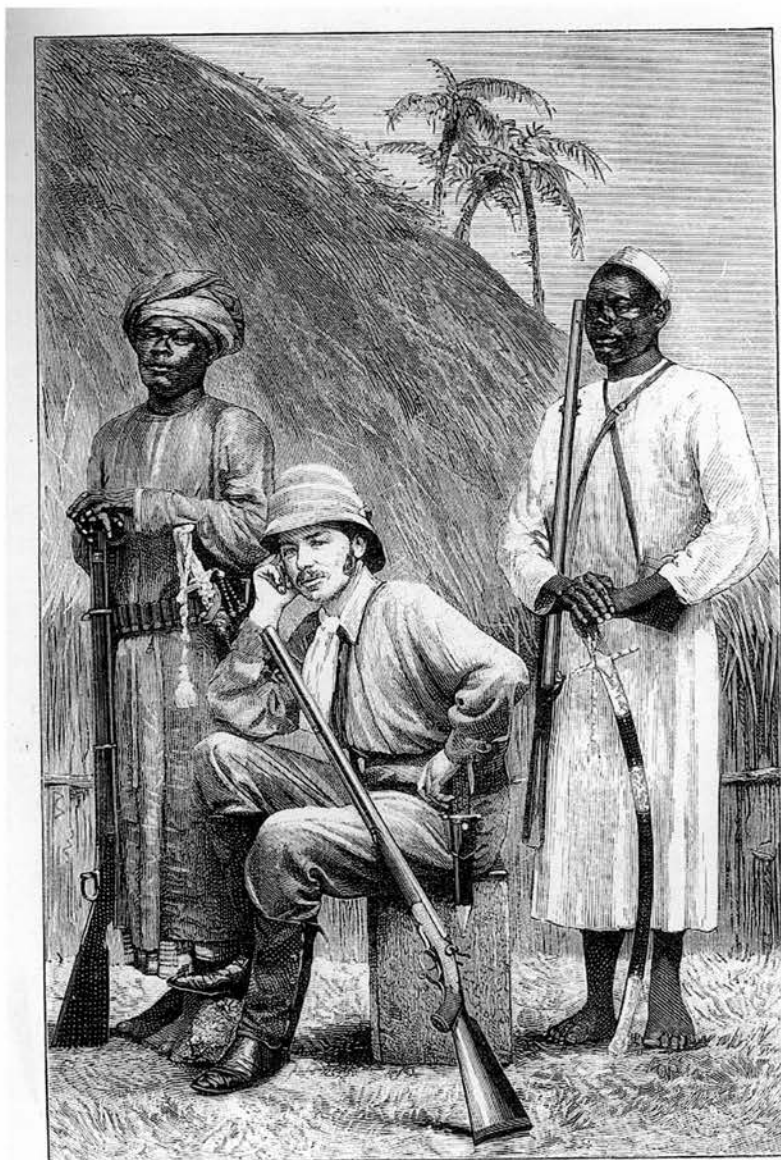
In order to understand some of the reasons for conducting this study, it is helpful to briefly consider the early history of European encounter with the Maasai people. While thoughts of our current day consider the Maasai a fascinating people with a rich history, the early western encounters were often filled with apprehension and fear. The first known written description of the Maasai comes from missionary pioneer Dr. Ludwig Krapf who wrote of his journeys in East Africa in 1860, "They are dreaded as warriors, laying all waste with fire and sword, so that the weaker tribes do not venture to resist them."<sup>12</sup> In 1882, Scottish explorer Joseph Thomson

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<sup>12</sup>Ludwig Krapf, *Travels, Researches and Missionary Labours During an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa* (London: Trubner, 1860), 359.



led an expedition for the Royal Geographical Society exploring regions of East Africa inhabited by the Maasai. The following lithograph shows Thomson reviewing his caravan before setting out on his important journey.<sup>13</sup>



REVIEWING THE EXPEDITION.

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Fig. 1. Thomson Reviewing the Expedition (1885).

<sup>13</sup>Lithograph: Joseph Thomson, *Through Masai Land* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1885), 60.

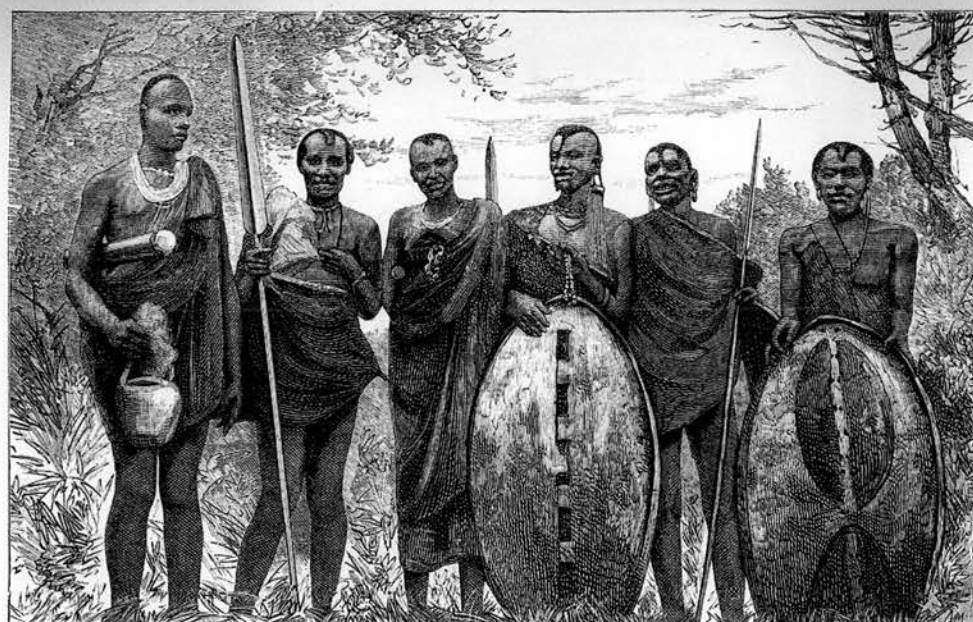
Thomson greatly anticipated his encounter with Maasai people. He recorded these impressions of his first meeting: "The word was passed round that the Masai had come....Passing through the forest, we soon set our eyes upon the dreaded warriors that had been so long the subject of my waking dreams, and I could not but involuntarily exclaim, 'What splendid fellows!'"<sup>14</sup> In 1885, Thomson published his famous and often quoted work on the Maasai, *Through Masai Land*.<sup>15</sup> Thomson also reproduced the first lithographs of Maasai people. The image following the thesis cover, the frontispiece of Thomson's book, and the following images help to convey his admiration and is indicative of the manner in which Maasai people have been portrayed to those outside their area of inhabitation from the very earliest encounters.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Thomson, *Masai Land*, 160. Differing spellings have been used over the years to describe this people. Writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries used "Masai." As ethnolinguistics became an academic discipline, most writers changed to "Maasai." In this paper, I will use the spelling "Maasai" as it reflects both a proper pronunciation of the way Maasai people refer to themselves (*ol maasani*) and a cultural understanding that these are people who speak *ol maa*. See also Frans Mol, *Maa: A Dictionary of the Maasai Language and Folklore* (Nairobi: Marketing and Publishing, Ltd., 1978), 99.

<sup>15</sup>Thomson, *Masai Land*, see especially Chapter 10, "Masai Land and the Masai," 403-449.

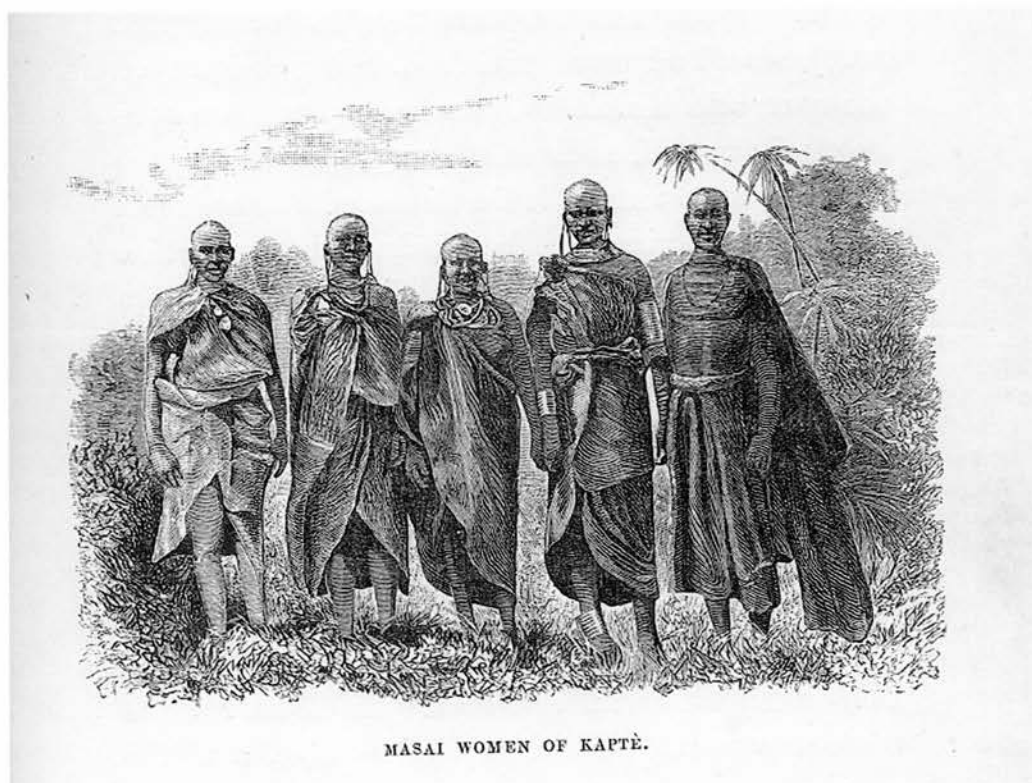
<sup>16</sup>Lithographs: Thomson, *Masai Land* (On the Warpath), frontispiece, (Warriors at Kapte), 304, (Women of Kapte), 315.



MASAI WARRIORS OF KAPTÈ

Page 30 4.

Fig. 2. Warriors of Kapte (1885).



MASAI WOMEN OF KAPTÈ.

Fig. 3. Women of Kapte (1885).

Since the days of Krapf and Thomson, an enormous amount of study and research now provides records on the Maasai, their life, and their culture. While the second chapter of this thesis provides a summary of Maasai life and culture needed to set the context, it is not my purpose to repeat what has already been done. Fine resources listed in the bibliography, several authored by Maasai writers (Kipuri, Mpayei, Saitoti, and Sankan), detail many particulars of Maasai culture not expounded in this thesis. By working side-by-side with Maasai Christian church leaders to discover new understandings of Maasai worship and worship leader development in the PCEA, this study engages and produces original research and analysis in the area of Maasai Christian worship and seeks to ascertain and address methods and means for assisting indigenous church development.

#### *The Need for Maasai Worship Research*

The justification for this thesis is academic, theological, and practical. This study is justified academically by the fact that no previous detailed research on Maasai Christian worship exists and thus offers a unique and original contribution to scholarship. This study is justified theologically by the fact that there is very little written about Maasai Christianity and even less on a theology of Maasai Christian worship. This study is justified practically by the fact that Maasai lay people bear the main responsibility of worship leadership in a majority of Kenya's Maasai PCEA churches and will benefit from their own reflection on the issues at hand through the participatory research method employed and a training program and format likely to arise from this project.

In a paper given at a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Movements on Campus, at the University of Namibia, 23 August 1995, the Hon. Dr. Zephaniah Kameeta told a group of students,

As Africans we cannot worship God as Europeans, Asians or Americans. We are Africans and we worship God as Africans. To deny what we are and to worship God as someone else is to deny our very existence and creation by God.<sup>17</sup>

The importance of Kameeta's fervent speech cannot be overemphasized.

One unique and enduring feature of Christianity lies in its ability to embrace the particular traits of any given culture, provided those distinctives are not outside the bounds of its ethical boundaries. That which is not against Christ can be sanctified by Him for use in His Church.<sup>18</sup> Within the context of a specific focus group, the *Keekonyokie* Maasai, and a defined geographical area, the PCEA mission areas in Kenya's *Ewuaso Kedong* region, this thesis serves to affirm the validity of these postulations and to provide distinctive information and supportive tools for indigenous Maasai Christian worship leaders in these areas to use in their work and worship and to advance scholarship in the field of non-western Christianity.

Finally, I hope that western Christians and church leaders can learn from the research and findings of this project and be inspired by the witness of the African Church and Maasai Christians. In a lecture at Princeton Theological Seminary, missiologist Andrew Walls reminded students of the current importance of the

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<sup>17</sup>Zephaniah Kameeta, "Worshipping God in an African Way" in *Worshipping God As Africans: Report on the Afalma-Namibia Workshop and Festival* (Windhoek, Namibia: EIN Publications, 1995), 97.

<sup>18</sup>Acts, Chapter 10, recounts the Apostle Peter's cross-cultural encounter with Gentile Christians. Through a vision from God, Peter learned that supposedly unclean Gentiles were to be recipients of Christian baptism and incorporated into the body of Christ.

regions once counted as infantile in Christian faith. His statements challenge those in the west to seriously consider the life and work of the church in other regions as they may be a precursor of what the global Christian community will look like.

...the most remarkable century in the history of the expansion of Christianity has been the twentieth. As a result of missions, the center of gravity of the church shifted substantially during a single lifetime. Europe, so long the Christian heartland, the matrix of such formative Christian movements as the sixteenth-century reformers, has seen quiet but insistent Christian erosion....Africa has quietly slipped into the place once occupied by Europe; and the third Christian millennium begins with the likelihood that the West will matter less and less in Christian affairs, as the faith becomes more and more associated with, and more and more marked by, the thought and life of Africa, Latin America, and Asia.<sup>19</sup>

Walls concludes, "We need to reflect on the implications of Africa, Latin America, and Asia becoming the home of representative Christianity, that is, mainstream, norm-setting Christianity."<sup>20</sup> If African Christians are indeed becoming one of the new standard-bearers of Christ in the new millennium, it is only wise that western church folk seriously consider their gifts and leadership and, in the case of this thesis, their contribution to Christian worship.

"To deal with the relationships between worship and culture is at once to deal with the heart of the Christian life," writes Anita Stauffer in a Lutheran report on contextual worship.<sup>21</sup> For Christians of every territory, people, and tongue, worship is at the epicenter of faith and life. John Piper, author and pastor of

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<sup>19</sup>Andrew F. Walls, "From Christendom to World Christianity: Missions and the Demographic Transformation of the Church," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, XXII, no. 3 (2001), 323.

<sup>20</sup>Walls, "Christendom to World Christianity," 327.

<sup>21</sup>Anita Stauffer, "Worship: Ecumenical Core and Cultural Context" in *Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1996), 7.



Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, writes that worship is the ultimate goal of the Church. Citing that, although global missionary activity is vitally necessary, it is not the reason the Church exists. Piper deftly explains that global evangelization and worship go together in order to reach the essential purpose of honoring God in worship.

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.<sup>22</sup>

If one agrees that worship is foundational to Christian experience, then the purpose and justification for its study in all cultures is paramount. Research and careful consideration of the worship practices of Presbyterian Maasai Christians in the *Euwaso Kedong* Valley of Kenya is valuable to both ecclesiastical and academic communities as it encourages world Christians with a glimpse of the Church universal providing an opportunity for churches to learn from each other and gives the academic community a new and original contribution to scholarship from a hitherto unexplored field. When examining the heart of worship of a Christian people, we discover their cultural uniqueness and the gifts and abilities bestowed upon them by the Creator. In so doing, our understanding of Christian worship enlarges and our own worship practice augments. So, with a kaleidoscope of words, songs, and traditions, "Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy!" (Psalm 67:3-4)<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 11.

<sup>23</sup>*The NRSV Reference Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).



## CHAPTER TWO

### MAASAI CULTURE AND RELIGION

#### Life and Culture

In the Great Rift Valley of Kenya and Tanzania, a proud tribe of nomadic herdsmen wander the dry brown scrub grass dotted with green acacia thorn trees. Their land is harsh, seared by soaring temperatures and driving winds. With cattle, goats, and sheep they move their families in search of fresh grass and precious water. Their villages are arranged in circles. Their homes are made from dung. Their lifestyle is simple—yet their lives are filled with rich traditions and ceremony. In the epoch of modernization, they are a living witness to a vanishing culture. They call themselves Maasai.<sup>1</sup>

I penned these words in 1982 when, as a young college student, I had my first encounter with Maasai people spending two months living in a Maasai village as a Presbyterian mission volunteer. My reaction then was much like that of others who have written about the Maasai—respect and admiration. For over 20 years now, I have had the privilege of working with Maasai people. This long-standing relationship affords me a unique opportunity of understanding their distinctive culture and the ever-changing influences they face. While I have traversed the breadth of Maasai territories in both Kenya and Tanzania, I spend the majority of my time in the Kajiado (*Olkejuado*, long river) district of Kenya and so have a much clearer picture of Maasai life among the clans, sections, and families occupying this

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<sup>1</sup>Fred Foy Strang, *Maasai Oral Literature* (Greenville, SC: Furman University, 1983), 3.

geographical area. In order to distinguish between the mythical Maasai of coffee table books and safari tour vans and the actual Maasai who live in East Africa, it is important to distinguish between historical Maasai culture and contemporary Maasai culture, examining changing Maasai culture in the process. As a background to this study, a general account of the Maasai people follows.

### *Historical & Contemporary Maasai Culture*

The Maasai are a Nilo-Hamitic group of herds-people who live in East Africa, specifically in the countries of Kenya and Tanzania. Their origins have been a subject of lively academic and anthropological discussion. Some early writers claimed Semitic ancestry dating back over 5,000 years, but more recent scholarship points to a somewhat later migration from northern Africa.<sup>2</sup> Millennia ago, a tall, slender group of Nilotes practiced hunting and gathering in the southern part of what is now Sudan. When knowledge of agriculture came through that region, the Nilotes tried their hand, but failed. Finding their true calling with animals, they became accomplished herds-people and moved southward seeking suitable lands for their livestock. Concurrently, in what is now Ethiopia, another people group took up agriculture and developed a terrace system. Known as the Megalithic Cushites for their expert stonework in terrace farming and Hamitic language, they also moved southward to the fertile highlands of Kenya. Later, the Nilotes and Hamites intermarried resulting in a hybrid group which became known as the Maasai. This

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<sup>2</sup>For a review of the debate of Maasai origin see: Dirk Berg-Schlosser, *Tradition and Change in Kenya* (Paderborn, Germany: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1984), 153. Concerning the ancient Semitic migration theory see: C.C. Luck, "The Origin of the Masai and Kindred African Tribes," *Journal of East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society*, vol. 26 (1926), 91-187.

synthesis can be readily observed in the Maasai practices of age-group divisions (Nilotic) and male circumcision and female clitoridectomy (Hamitic). In addition, the short bladed sword, flowing toga-like garment, and leather sandals used by modern Maasai are reminiscent of ancient Roman influences from a Northern African origin.<sup>3</sup> The Maasai, an amalgam of Nile region Nilotes and a North African people speaking a Hamitic language, began a southward trek arriving near Lake Turkana about the 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. subsequently settling into the fertile grazing plains of the Great Rift Valley before the arrival of European explorers.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1930's, an account of this Maasai migration, which may be regarded as a particular version of oral history, was narrated by the important ceremonial and religious leader of the Maasai, *oloiboni* (the spiritual leader) of Lolbene:

We know we followed the great river, to the land called Uganda, at which today your great railway ends. Our ancestors marched for so long that seven times birth was given to children who became parents in that long march, and those who started the march were dead a long time before their destination was reached by their descendants. We came from a country where no niggers (sic) lived, unless they were brought as slaves and acted as servants. When we finally reached Kenya there was not very much left of the tribe of the Masai, for disease and battles on the way had reduced our numbers greatly. But on Mount Kenya, where our first settlement was created, peace reigned so that it was possible to build up our tribe again. There we were helped even by the Kikuyu girls whom we captured, for they are quite good in breeding children. The customs of their tribe are bad,

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<sup>3</sup>Saitoti offers a sketch of these items used by modern Maasai to legitimize this claim and further proposes that the hair braiding of the Maasai warriors is in the shape of the helmet of a Roman soldier. Saitoti, *Maasai*, 21.

<sup>4</sup>For the purposes of this paper, this succinct historical overview is sufficient. Those who wish to delve more deeply into the historical and anthropological origins of the people group known as the Maasai may find assistance in the previously mentioned sources and in the following: R.E.W. Lewis, "The Maasai Traditional Way of Life," *Nairobi: City and Region*, W.T.W. Morgan, ed., (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 66-76. Saitoti, *Maasai*, 17-25. Cynthia Salvadori and Andrew Fedders, *Maasai* (London: Collins, 1973), 7-9.

but such customs die quickly in the making of love, and the children were reared as Masai. From Kenya we started to spread, and you know the large section of the country which we used to call ours.<sup>5</sup>

Even today, if asked about their origins, many Maasai would tell the stories they have heard from their childhood such as “The Origin of the Maasai” and “The Maasai and Their Cattle.” Versions of these tales, recorded by the author in 1982, are included in the appendix (Appendix 2). These tales of origin recount the Maasai as the chosen people of *Enkai* (God) who received land and all cattle and who were separated from *Enkai* by an act of disobedience that led to a life of difficulty. It is important to understand that while western and even some African scholars espouse particular views concerning their origin, most Maasai largely rely on the stories of their elders and oral tradition to explain their own history. In his groundbreaking early work, Sir Alfred Claude Hollis presents accounts of Maasai origin and other stories that remain essentially unchanged today.<sup>6</sup> Even my own recordings and translations of Maasai oral literature some eighty years later reflect little change. This is readily seen in a side-by side comparison of a story of Maasai origin collected by Hollis in 1905 and a story of Maasai origin I collected in 1982.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>The English translation of this narration is found in Oskar Koenig, *The Maasai Story* (London: Michael Joseph, 1956), 45-46.

<sup>6</sup>Alfred Claude Hollis, *The Maasai, Their Language and Folklore* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905).

<sup>7</sup>Hollis, *Maasai Language*, 266-269, and Strang, *Maasai Literature*, 2. According to Mol, *Maasai Dictionary*, 57, a Dorobo is member of a remnant group of people who hunt. They are considered inferior in Maasai orality.

***The Beginner of the Earth***  
(Hollis, 1905)

We were told by elders that when God came to prepare the world he found three things in the land, a Dorobo, an elephant, and a serpent, all of whom lived together. After a time the Dorobo obtained a cow.

One day the Dorobo said to the serpent: "Friend, why does my body itch so that I have to scratch whenever you blow on me?" The serpent replied: "Oh, my father, I do not blow my bad breath on you on purpose."

At this the Dorobo remained silent, but that same evening he picked up his club, and struck the serpent on the head, and killed it.

On the morrow the elephant asked the Dorobo where the thin one was. The Dorobo replied that he did not know, but the elephant was aware that he had killed it and that he refused to admit his guilt.

During the night it rained heavily, and the Dorobo was able to take his cow to graze, and he watered it at the puddles of rain. They remained there many days, and at length the elephant gave birth to a young one. After a time all the puddles became dry except in one place.

Now the elephant used to go and eat grass, and when she had had enough to eat, she would return to drink at the puddle, lying down in the water and stirring it up so that when the Dorobo drove his cow to water he found it muddy.

***The Maasai and their Cattle***  
(Strang, 1982)

In the beginning an elephant, a serpent, and a Dorobo all lived together on the earth.

The Dorobo asked the serpent, "Why do I itch when you breathe on me?"

The serpent didn't answer, so the Dorobo became angry

and killed it.

Later the elephant asked the Dorobo where the serpent was; the Dorobo said he didn't know, but the elephant guessed and she was sad.

Many days later  
the elephant gave birth

and then went away to eat.

When she returned, she drank from a pool near the Dorobo's house.

One day the Dorobo made an arrow, and shot the elephant, and killed it. The young elephant then went to another country. "The Dorobo is bad," it said, "I will not stop with him any longer. He first of all killed the snake and now he has killed mother. I will go away and not live with him again."

On its arrival at another country the young elephant met a Masai, who asked it where it came from. The young elephant replied: "I come from the Dorobo's kraal. He is living in yonder forest and he has killed the serpent and my mother." The Masai inquired: "Is it true that there is a Dorobo there who has killed your mother and the serpent?"

When he had received a reply in the affirmative, he said: "Let us go there. I should like to see him." They went and found the Dorobo's hut, which God had turned upside down, and the door of which looked towards the sky.

God called the Dorobo and said to him: "I wish you to come tomorrow morning for I have something to tell you." The Masai heard this, and in the morning, he went and said to God: "I have come." God told him to take an axe, and to build a big kraal in three days. When it was ready, he was to go and search for a thin calf, which he would find in the forest. This he was to bring to the kraal and slaughter. The meat was to be tied up in the hide and not to be eaten. The hide was to be fastened outside the door of the hut, firewood was to be fetched, and a big fire lit, into which the meat was to be thrown. He was then to hide himself in the hut, and not to be startled when he heard a great noise outside resembling thunder.

The Dorobo was very angry at the elephant for dirtying his water, so he shot her with his arrow.

The baby elephant saw its dead mother and ran away.

In the bush, the elephant met a Maasai *morán*.

They both went back to the Dorobo's house to avenge the killing.

During the night God told the Dorobo to go to a specific place the next day to receive a message. The Maasai heard this, but the Dorobo, sleeping heavily, did not. The Maasai went to the spot, and there God told him to build a cattle boma and a house for himself. Then God told him to find a calf, slaughter it,

and tie the meat up in the hide.

After this, he was to build a fire and put the bundle of meat on it. God told the Maasai to shut himself up in his house and not to be startled or come out even if he heard a noise as loud as thunder.



The Masai did as he was bid. He searched for a calf, which he found, and when he had slaughtered it he tied up the flesh in the hide. He fetched some firewood, lit a big fire, threw in the meat, and entered the hut, leaving the fire burning outside.

God then caused a strip of hide to descend from heaven which was suspended over the calf-skin. Cattle at once commenced to descend one by one by the strip of hide until the whole of the krall was filled.

The Masai was startled, and uttered an exclamation of astonishment when the animals began to press against one another, and to break down the hut where the Masai was.

He then went outside the hut, and found that the strip of hide had been cut, after which no more cattle came down from heaven.

God asked him whether the cattle that were there were sufficient, 'for,' he said, "You will receive no more owing to you being surprised." The Masai then went away, and attended to the animals which had been given him.

The Dorobo lost the cattle, and has had to shoot game for his food ever since. Nowadays, if cattle are seen in the possession of Bantu tribes, it is presumed that they have been stolen or found, and the Masai say: "These are our animals, let us go and take them, for God in olden days gave us all the cattle upon the earth."

So, the Maasai did these things

and then shut himself up inside the house.

God then let down a strip of hide into the middle of the meat on the fire, and for many hours cows came down the hide into the boma.

Because the boma became so full of cattle, they pressed against the house. The noises startled the Maasai,

and he opened the door to see what was happening. At that moment, God cut the hide so that no more cows could come

because the Maasai had disobeyed.

Ever since that day, the Dorobo has not had any cattle.

The Maasai say,  
"In the beginning,  
God gave us all the cattle in the world."

As one can readily see, the story line of these independently recorded tales is essentially the same in spite of a time span of some eighty years. For many contemporary Maasai, this story and the complementary story “The Origin of the Maasai” are sufficient to explain their own history to their children and to outsiders.<sup>8</sup> For others, especially ones who now attend school, such stories are important as oral tradition, but not necessarily seen as facts of history and science.

In this regard, contemporary Maasai culture is in a continual process of change. As more and more young Maasai boys and girls attend government and parochial schools, these oral histories are reclassified as myths. Subsequently, science, archeology, and anthropology are taught as fact. The result, especially in the geographic area specific to this thesis, is a divided younger generation and a source of dissention between the younger and older members of a group. For instance, those who attend school may not know all the traditional oral history, but will know the facts learned in class. Those who do not attend school largely know the Maasai traditional narratives, but know very little of school teachings. This divergence of view causes much familial difficulty and conflict and points to a changing Maasai culture.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Areas of Inhabitation and Population*

The following map (Fig. 4) shows an approximate area (highlighted in red) where the Maasai people reside today in the countries of Kenya and Tanzania.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>The story “The Origin of the Maasai” was recorded by the writer in the village of *Olosho-oibor* on 27 June 1982. See Appendix 2.

<sup>9</sup>See Fig. 28.

<sup>10</sup>Map (Fig. 4) by the author.



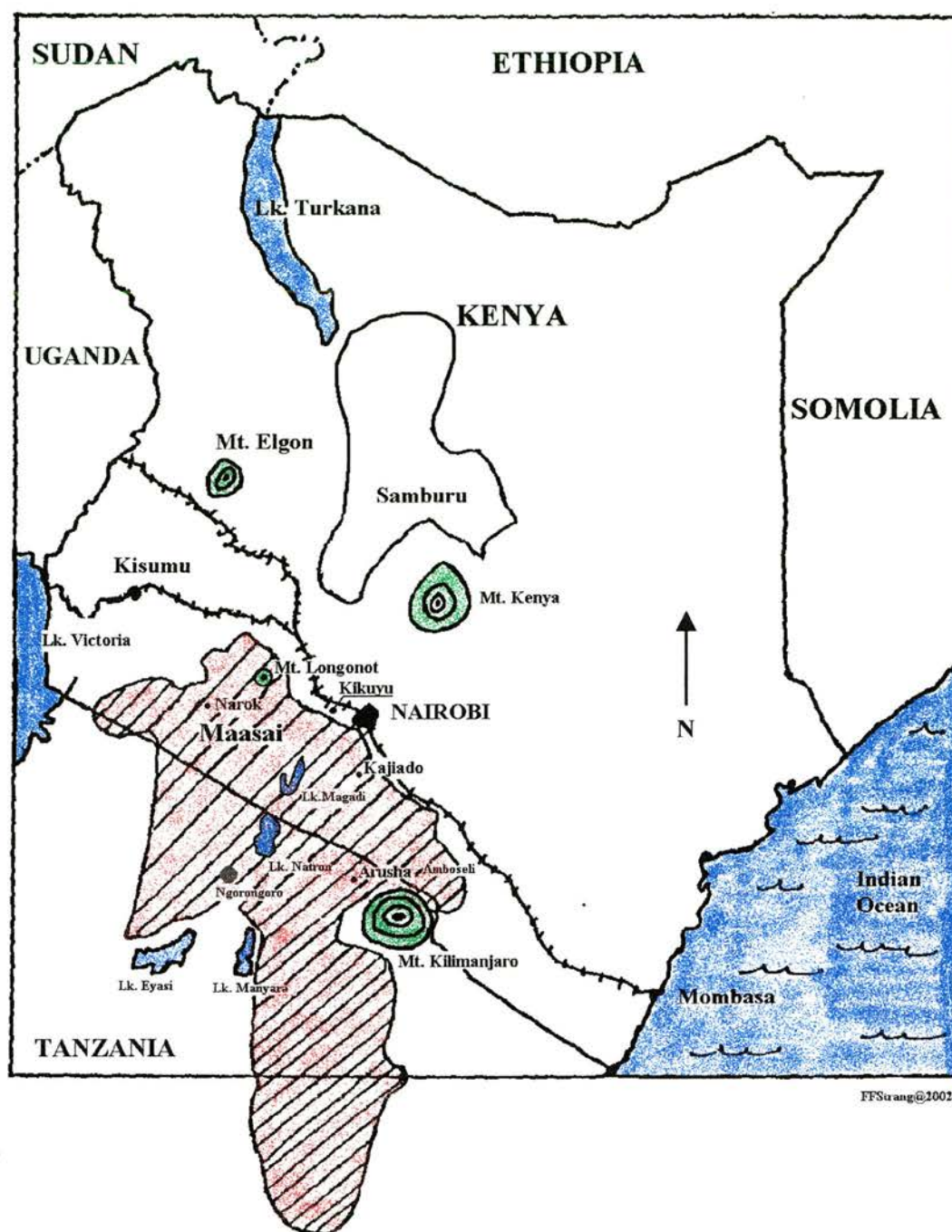


Fig. 4. Map Illustrating Approximate Area of Maasai Inhabitation.

The Kenyan Maasai now occupy areas set by the government while the Maasai of Tanzania are somewhat freer to wander. The population of the Maasai as derived from mid-1980's Kenyan and Tanzanian census figures was about

240,000.<sup>11</sup> A more recent publication lists their numbers in Kenya to be 377,089.<sup>12</sup> These figures should be viewed as approximations because the Maasai do not like to be counted and often a census official will arrive at a village to find only a few women and children while all the rest of the village has gone into the bush to avoid enumeration. This was particularly apparent in data gathering for the Kenyan census when we lived in the village of *Olosho-oibor* in 1989. One morning, we woke to find all the men, older boys, and animals missing from the village. Later that morning, a government land rover made its way to the village with a census team. We observed the women responding to census questions regarding the number of people other than themselves living in their houses with the phrase, “*Meeti*” (none). When asked other probing questions, the women simply said, “*Maiyolo*” (I don’t know). Traditionally, Maasai people, leery of enumeration, do not want to give to a potential enemy their numerical strength (men) or village wealth (animals).

In the most recent statistical work in global Christianity, David Barrett lists the population of Maasai in Kenya to be 680,469 and projects this to rise to 944,591 by the year 2025.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, he lists 283,323 as the current Maasai population of Tanzania with a projected increase to 489,589 by 2025.<sup>14</sup> These figures do not take into consideration the unknown factor of the AIDS pandemic and its impact on the Maasai people. While the scope of this thesis cannot explore the intricacies of

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<sup>11</sup>Berg-Schlosser, *Tradition and Change*, 152-153.

<sup>12</sup>KENYAWEB (1999), Internet:  
<http://kenyaweb.com/people/nilotes/maasai/maasai.html>, Accessed 25 January 2001.

<sup>13</sup>David Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Nairobi: Oxford, 2001), vol. 2, 128.

<sup>14</sup>Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, 214.

this health crisis, it is clear in the changing Maasai culture described in this chapter, implications of modernization and the broadening of relationships beyond the traditional bounds of Maasai society will have a significant impact on individual longevity and future population figures. Projection of future Maasai population is just that—a projection. Barrett lists the current 2001 sum of Maasai population for Kenya and Tanzania as a grand total of 963,792.

### *Maasai Group Divisions and Locations*

According to Maasai oral history, two moieties divide the entire Maasai people into hemispheres, *Odo Mongi*, the red oxen and *Orok Kiteng*, the black ox (*mongi* is plural while *kiteng* is singular). This division, taken from the Maasai oral history account of their genealogy, simply refers to the two wives of the legendary first Maasai, called *Maasinta* or *Oledukuya*. *Maasinta* took two wives, the first living on the right (*tatene*) hand side of the village entrance, the second on the left (*kedianye*). The sons born to these two women made up the two major divisions of the Maasai people, the right hand or red oxen side, and the left hand, or the black oxen side, names referring to the position of the wife's house and the predominate color of her calves and cattle. Within these halves were large divisions called clans (two words used for clan: s: *olgilata*, pl: *ilgilat* and s: *enkishomi*, pl: *inkishomin*). *Massinta's* two wives had a number of sons, some say five, others up to seven. Specific clan divisions traced to these original sons. Furthermore, these clans subdivided into smaller groups (s: *olosh*, pl: *iloshon*) labeled sections, tribes, or tribal sections and, from there, divided into specific families (s: *olmarei*, pl: *ilmarei*; interestingly, s: *enkisohomi* and pl: *inkishomin* may also be used). Maasai author,

S.S. Sankan, offers a succinct explanation listing five original divisions.<sup>15</sup> Frans Mol, catholic missionary among the Maasai since 1961 and expert in Maasai language, history, and folklore, describes six divisions as he adds another son, Mamasita.<sup>16</sup>

In contemporary Maasai life, divisional explanations are closely akin to Tepilit Saitoti's divisions given in his book, *Maasai*. Saitoti refers to partitions that are associated with a geographical area of living. Twelve sections can be identified today: *Kisongo* (the largest section), *Matapato*, *Purko*, *Loitai*, *Loodokilani*, *Keekonyoki*, *Kaputiei*, *Laitayiok*, *Damat*, *Siria*, *Wuasinkishu*, and *Dalalekutuk*. Each sub-group operates primarily in a specific geographic area. In context of day-to-day life, the practicality of these divisions compels each family to have a brand-mark (s: *olmishire*, pl: *ilmishiren*) for their cattle. These marks may indicate division, clan, sub-section, and family. A Maasai encountering cattle could observe the brand-mark and readily identify whether the cattle belonged to a relative.

The following map (Fig. 5) illustrates the approximate area inhabited by each of the Maasai sections. With the education of a younger generation of new job seekers and the ease of transportation, one finds more crossing of geographic areas and mixing of families. This migration pattern is not yet documented, but centers around population influx into trading areas, towns, and cities. Today, it is not uncommon to stop for a meal in an establishment located in a predominately *Keekonyokie* area and be served by a young Maasai employee of *Matapato* origin.

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<sup>15</sup>S.S. Sankan, *The Maasai* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1971), 1-7.

<sup>16</sup>See: Mol, *Maa Dictionary*, 43, 50, 162 and Frans Mol, *Language and Culture Dictionary* (Limuru: Kolbe Press, 1996), 20-21.

Nevertheless, the traditional family areas represented on the map are still where the majority of Maasai of that particular section reside.<sup>17</sup>

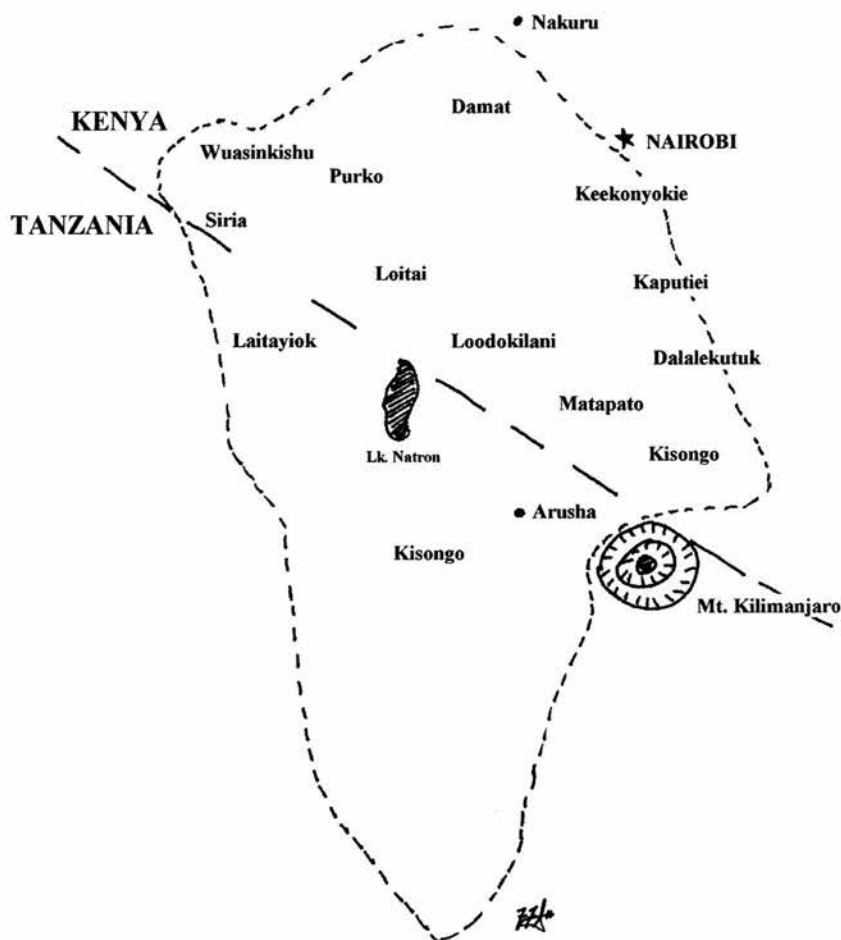


Fig. 5. Map Showing Approximate Geographic Locations of Maasai Groups.

Connecting these Maasai sections in a precise genealogical pattern is a complex endeavor. The following chart (Fig. 6) gives a visual explanation of this complicated genealogical structure. The emphasis on the *Keekonyokie* (*il keekonyokie*) section, wherein this study concentrates, takes that line to a current family. From each clan there can be more than one group. Saitoti also cites twelve

<sup>17</sup>Map (Fig. 5) drawn by author with data from Saitoti, *Maasai*, 19.

active groups associating each with a geographical section.<sup>18</sup>

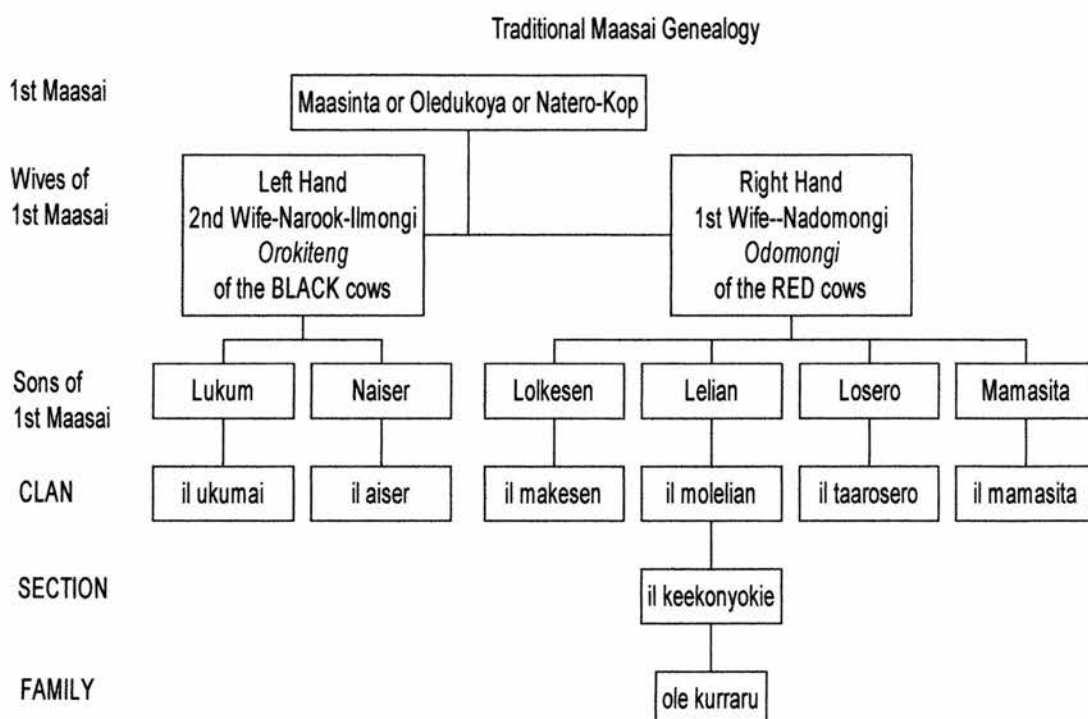


Fig. 6. Traditional Maasai Genealogy (Strang).

The individual sections of Maasai people in both historic and contemporary expression have distinct habits and practices. For instance, the Maasai in Kenya's *Keekonyokie* section prefer combinations of red and black, orange and white beads and warriors with short length togas (*ilkarash*) while the *Kisongo* Maasai of Tanzania like blue and dark red beads and warriors with longer *ilkarash*. Furthermore, there are differences in house construction, ceremony, and language usage among the sub-sections with each group playfully bantering insults and jokes with one another regarding these differences. There are also differences between Maasai groups living closer to developed areas and those who are far from

<sup>18</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 18-19.



modernization. In general, the Tanzanian Maasai are thought to be more traditional and less influenced by modernity than those in Kenya. This fact is rapidly changing, however, especially with the development of Arusha as a major trading center and geographic government administrative hub. Regardless of their preferences of practice and their positions with regard to modernization, Maasai tend to be fiercely loyal to their clan, sub-section, and family.

### *The Importance of Cattle*

Maasai family connections are even readily visible in their cattle. When a Maasai walks through the bush and comes upon a group of cattle, he can immediately detect if this herd belongs to one of his clan, sub-section, or family members. Brand-marks (s: *emishirata*, pl: *imishirat*) and ear cuttings (s: *olponoto*, pl: *ilponnot*) on cattle are purposefully crafted in order to give this information. For each of the five major clans, there is a certain brand which all the cattle of all the sub-sections and families within that clan exhibit. A second brand identifies the particular sub-section to which the animals belong. In addition to the brand mark, Maasai cut the ears of cattle (other animals are cut at the discretion of the owner). One ear is cut to show association with the right or left hand, and the other is cut to indicate family affiliation. Brand-marks and ear cuttings not only establish owner identification of cattle, but they encourage community identity and responsibility.<sup>19</sup>

Historic Maasai society revolved around cattle. Even with all the changes of the past century, cattle remain the means of measure for a family, a village, even an entire tribal group. The governing of day-to-day life of most modern Maasai rests in the keeping of cattle. Men and boys herd them, warriors steal them, religious

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<sup>19</sup>See photos by Carol Beckwith in Saitoti, *Maasai*, 252-253.

leaders sacrifice them, women and girls milk them, children play with them, elders buy and sell them. Cattle are usually only slaughtered on special occasions with goats and sheep filling the more common role of food provision. Being people of cattle (*iltung'ana loo ngishu*) is clearly part of Maasai identity and something they do well. In 1960, Hickman and Dickins wrote, "The Maasai 'way of life' is very well suited to the local conditions. They consider cultivation beneath them, indeed it would be impossible without irrigation in much of their territory. They, more than any other people, have made a success of living in one of the most difficult environments in Africa."<sup>20</sup> Cattle are an integral part of the very fabric of Maasai culture and held in high regard even today. Many Maasai live a pastoral lifestyle moving their herds in search of water and grazing. In the beginning of my work among the Maasai, I learned very quickly the protocol of greeting Maasai men. Unlike western culture where primary inquiries concern family, health, and home, in traditional Maasai culture, it is customary to first ask, "How are the cows?" (*Kejaa loo ngishu?*) or, at least in a now changing Maasai culture, to ask a combined question concerning the status of both the animals and the children.

While many western writers and even some African authors assert that the Maasai people are a purely pastoral tribe, it is amiss not to realize the tribal interaction and intermarriage which occurs in Maasai society and subtly changes community dynamics.<sup>21</sup> On the one hand, Maasai life strongly patterns itself around cattle, while on the other hand, many Maasai men marry women of other people

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<sup>20</sup>G.M. Hickman and W.H.G. Dickins, *The Lands and Peoples of East Africa* (London: Longmans, 1960), 127.

<sup>21</sup>John Galaty, "Being 'Maasai'; Being 'People-of-Cattle': Ethnic Shifters in East Africa," *American Ethnologist*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1982), 1-20.



groups and many Maasai families practice farming, hunting, and modern ranching techniques. Thomas Spear and Richard Waller give an insightful analysis of what it means to be Maasai. They show that, in the history of the Maasai people, there have always been practices, such as hunting and farming, which are traditionally not viewed as part of what it means to be Maasai in the ideal sense. Tracing historic interaction between different tribal groups, Spear and Waller present the case that the view of the Maasai as a purely pastoral people is not, in reality, what has ever existed.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, John Galaty concludes that the Maasai utilize a mythic prototype in regarding themselves as a pastoral people in order to better standardize within the community their core Maasai values, but, in reality, there are some Maasai who have always practiced hunting and farming.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Spear and Waller point out that this pastoral ideal is part of the Maasai identity both within their tribe and in the world's view of them. In a changing Kenya, "the Maasai are clearly trying to adapt through asserting collective and individual rights to land and reformulating the ideology of what it is to be Maasai."<sup>24</sup>

### *Structures and Practices in Maasai Society*

Maasai society, both past and present, is predominately a male-oriented society. The age groupings of Maasai men are an important, regular cycle that sets the rhythm of Maasai life.<sup>25</sup> While age transitions apply to women, it is mostly the

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<sup>22</sup>Thomas Spear and Richard Waller, *Being Maasai* (London: James Curry, 1993), 14.

<sup>23</sup>Galaty, *Being 'Maasai,'* 20.

<sup>24</sup>Spear and Waller, *Being 'Maasai,'* 14.

<sup>25</sup>For a summary of the ceremonies and life cycle of Maasai men and women see: Mol, *Language and Culture*, 246-248.

ones for men that have special communal ceremony and public ritual: circumcision (*emuratare*) which initiates boys into warriorhood (*emurano*), promotion to junior elder status (*eunoto*), and moving from junior elder to becoming a full elder (*olngesher*). Surrounding these events is much ceremony and ritual with the entire clan involved. The warrior groups (*ilmurrani*, moran) are another significant grouping which have a dominant role in Maasai life. In the warrior's village (*manyata*), every Maasai male must spend time learning the duties of their position among their people. It is here that young, junior warriors are instructed by their elders on issues as diverse as warfare, customs, acceptable conduct, duties as a husband and father, and most aspects of traditional life in Maasai society. "One of the earliest images of the Maasai which was conveyed to the outside world was that of the romanticized 'noble savage' who leads an independent and proud existence and who defies all attempts to corrupt him by outside influences."<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, outside influences are greatly affecting the societal structure of the Maasai. Historically, the right hand, or older group of boys in an age group, become warriors first. Age groups are set by a council of elders in consultation with the area *oloiboni* (traditional spiritual leader) and consist of both the left and right hand groups. The age range within age group is approximately ten years. After a period ranging three to eight years, the left hand, or younger boys in that age group, are initiated into warrior status. Both right and left hand groups continue to serve as warriors for another similar period of time. A right hand warrior could serve up to fifteen years while a left hand warrior might only serve five. The government of Kenya, while not altogether forbidding the warrior period, pushes tribal leaders to

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<sup>26</sup>Berg-Schlosser, *Tradition and Change*, 174.

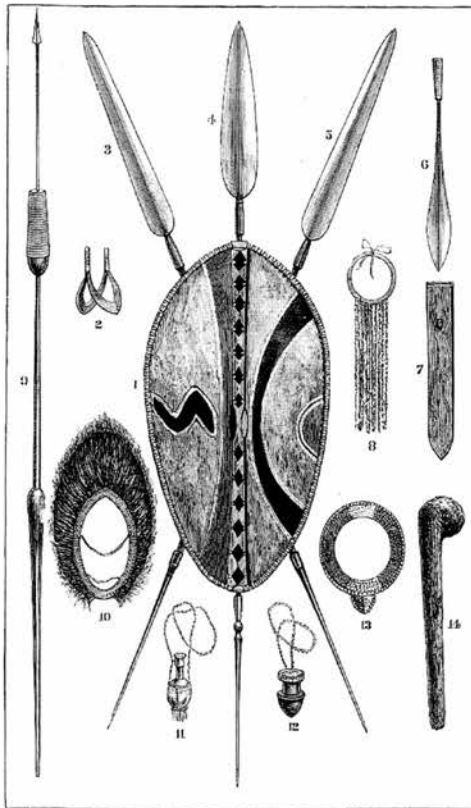
rush the age passage ceremonies so that men remain in the warrior period for a shortened time span. A changing Maasai culture sees this rushing through creating difficulties in societal structure as young men, who by their age should be warriors, are now sitting with the older men as elders. It is difficult to predict the future for the age grouping structure among the Maasai. However, at the time of this writing, it is anecdotally reported that there are plans for age group formations and their passages being made by *Keekonyokie* leaders. These passages remain an important part of Maasai heritage and, in whatever form they evolve, will likely continue to shape the structure of Maasai communal life.

While Maasai men enjoy independence, praise, and power, there are few opportunities for women to be independent, to achieve, or to have influence. In historic Maasai culture, women are dependent upon their husbands both for economic and social needs. Even today, women are required to undertake most of the daily work of living from building the home, to gathering firewood and water, to cooking, to child rearing. In areas where children attend school, it is mostly the women who must find money for tuition and boarding fees. Often a woman will refer to herself as a donkey (*osikiria*), a beast of burden. Within this patriarchal tribal structure, women have little chance for success in anything other than their roles as wife, mother, and home provider. Some Maasai women are experts in the art of beadwork and market their product with panache in Nairobi and other places.<sup>27</sup> However, for most Maasai women in traditional village areas, these kinds of achievements are rare. The following photographs show both historic and modern

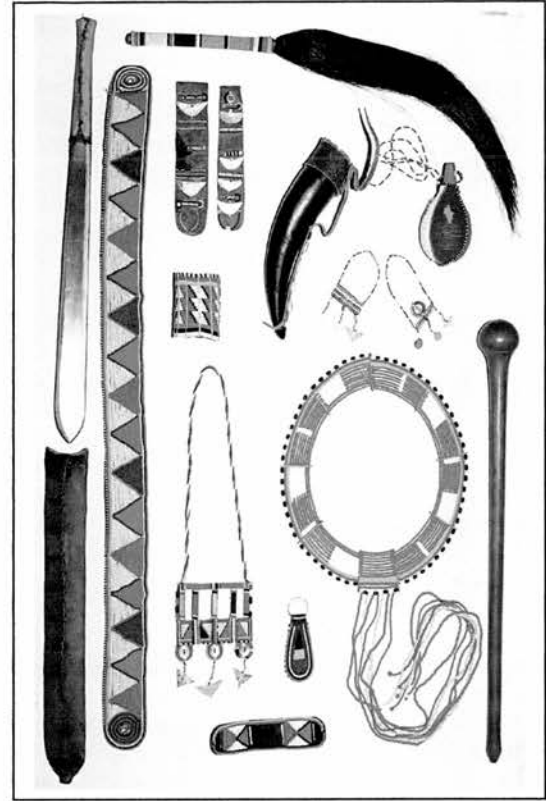
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<sup>27</sup>Two of our Maasai friends recently initiated a business relationship with a store in New York, USA. In addition, some Maasai women have recently formed cooperatives in order to have more control over bead pricing in the Nairobi marketplace.

beads and artifacts. The first is from Thomson's 1882 expedition (Fig. 7); the second is from a selection available in 2002 (Fig. 8).<sup>28</sup>



MAISAI WEAPONS AND ORNAMENTS.  
1. Shield.  
2. Arm Ornament of horn.  
3, 6. Spears of Northern Maasai Class.  
4. Spear of Southern Maasai.  
5. Sima or Sword.  
7. Skin Shield.  
8. Chain Neck Ornament.  
9. Antelope Horns.  
10. Ostrich Feather War Head-dress.  
11. Ivory Snuff Box.  
12. Horn Tobacco Box.  
13. Bead Necklet.  
14. Club.  
Page 126.



These items, in daily usage within the study area in 2002, include: sword and scabbard, beaded belt, fly whisk, leather earring, cow-horn fat container, beaded earring, snuff gourd, beaded bracelet and necklaces, club, beaded key ring, and beaded watch strap.

Fig. 7. Historic Maasai Artifacts (1885).

Fig. 8. Modern Maasai Artifacts (2002).

While Maasai women may have the ear of their husbands from time to time, the men mostly make the major decisions. Maasai women do go through an age-set system, but it is more a private matter than the public rites of passage for men. Analogous to the boys, girls traditionally go through circumcision (*emurata*) by cliterodectomy in a private ceremony. After this, a young woman (*esiankiki*) is led

<sup>28</sup>Thomson, *Through Maasailand*, 426 and Fred Foy Strang, *Missionary Photographic Archive: 1982-2003*, MaasaiArtifacts2002.jpeg.

away or married (*erikoto too nkishu*) to a man much older than she as either his first, second, third, or fourth wife. Then, as a married woman (*entoomonoi*), she hopefully becomes the mother of children (*ngoto enkeru*). The having of many children is a blessing to a Maasai family. Only when a woman is an old grandmother (*kokoo*) does she have widespread respect and a voice of power and influence in the village. Mol writes that it is in this grandmother stage that a Maasai woman is “a powerful force behind the scenes in the *enkang* and a spoiler of her loving grandchildren.”<sup>29</sup>

In spite of the traditional structure of their society, the Maasai have not existed without experiencing influence by outsiders and this certainly became apparent under the British colonial government. Colonization greatly affected the Maasai. Tepilit Ole Saitoti, a Maasai author, writes that through biased treaties, the Maasai lost their best lands to Europeans and, when they resisted, they lost many cattle and many of their lives.<sup>30</sup> At the turn of the century, smallpox, brought by Europeans on the heels of a severe drought, left the Maasai decimated and vulnerable to attack by enemy tribes. Saitoti points out that the colonial government in Kenya pushed the Maasai into a smaller and smaller tract of land while encouraging white settlements on the newly acquired territory. The Maasai resisted using the British legal system, but failed to thwart colonial encroachment. Additional Maasai resistance was put down forcibly by the colonial government. Maasai areas became off-limits to non-Africans unless special permission was granted. Some view this alienation as causing the Maasai to lag behind in terms of

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<sup>29</sup>Mol, *Language and Culture*, 248.

<sup>30</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 24.

their development as compared to many other people in the country.<sup>31</sup>

Elsbeth Huxley writes about East Africa from a background that dates back to her childhood in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. She traveled extensively in the East African region and contributed many keen observations to the state of uncertainty felt by many peoples in post-colonial/pre-independent East Africa. Like other authors, Huxley, impressed by the Maasai's stalwart resistance to change, wrote, "Unlike most tribes, the Masai, embedded in their matrix of customs, still resist Western ideas. The young men do not want to be government clerks and wear trousers. They prefer to herd cattle in a wisp of cloth; the boys have to be forced into school."<sup>32</sup> A recent commentary continues to reflect the Maasai resistance to change, "The Maasai have not fared well in modern Africa....Other tribes of Kenya, such as the Kikuyu for instance, have readily adapted to modern business, big cities, and formal systems of government. In contrast, the Maasai have persisted in their traditional ways, so, as the country takes more land for national parks and intensified agriculture, they suffer."<sup>33</sup>

There are various theories as to why the Maasai people have been resistant to change and conservative in their stalwart clinging to their traditional way of life. One theory is that the Maasai, because of their expertise as herdsman, were able to resist influences because they were so independently wealthy that there was no need to adopt outside ways. Another suggests that because of the Maasai warrior's fierce

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<sup>31</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 23-24.

<sup>32</sup>Elsbeth Huxley, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice: A Journey Through East Africa* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), 95.

<sup>33</sup>*The Maasai* (Luca Safari Ltd., 1999), Internet: <http://www.maasai.com/maasai.htm>, Accessed 22 March 2002.

power, the colonial government avoided development of the tribe. Some suggest the outside world had little to offer the Maasai that they deemed valuable. Another theory emphasizes that the Maasai's view of their own cultural superiority distanced them from the outside world. Finally, a theory suggests that the warrior age-set was effective in slowing development in the whole of Maasailand through their small, but significant, violent raids.<sup>34</sup> Saitoti notes, "Totally ignored by the colonial authority in terms of development, the Maasai are now lagging far behind most people of Tanzania and Kenya. Since gaining independence, Kenya and Tanzania have been faced with the task of helping the Maasai catch up with the rest of their nation's people."<sup>35</sup> Saitoti's terminology reflects a somewhat disappointed view toward his people's pastoral existence and his present desire for Maasai development and modernization.

Dorothy Hodgson recently completed a study of a group of Tanzanian Maasai, in which she concludes,

Paternalistic efforts in the early colonial period to design and implement development projects that would protect Maasai culture by enforcing the political-economic isolation of Maasai and sustaining them as pastoralists reified the distinction between Maasai as traditional and other Africans as modernizing. The abrupt shift in policies and practices in the 1950s, with accompanying pressures for Maasai to change rapidly, further heightened (and stigmatized) such differences. In turn, such differences were used by Tanzanian elites to further marginalize Maasai from political and economic power in the postcolonial period, and more recently to market them as relics of Africa's primitive past to lure tourists.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>For more details see: Robert Tignor, *The Colonial Transformation of Kenya* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 89-93.

<sup>35</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 24.

<sup>36</sup>Dorothy Hodgson, "Once Intrepid Warriors: Modernity and the Production of Maasai Masculinities," *Ethnology*, vol. 38, no. 2 (1999), 144.



Hodgson's comments reflect the current ambiguous sentiment East African governments hold concerning the Maasai. On the one hand, government officials value their attraction to tourists as many visitors want to see first-hand and up-close "the noble savage;" on the other hand, these officials are embarrassed as the Maasai continue their non-modern existence giving an impression that the entire country is backward.

The evolution to contemporary life involves many changes. Most schools require students to wear western school uniforms. Shopkeepers, government employees, and most people visiting Nairobi and other major cities dress in western attire. Many Christian churches require western dress for their clergy and lay leaders and, for those without such a requirement, peer pressure of other churchgoers often warrants western haberdashery. In a recent interview with a young Maasai man working as a waiter, one sees the tension of this changing culture. "Some days I do not know what to wear. Those days, I will wear my trousers, but take my *shuka* in my bag."<sup>37</sup> In contemporary Maasai culture, especially in the geographic area of this study, this duality of dress is a common way of life.

It is true that, even today in outlying areas of Kenya and in much of Tanzania, Maasai people live a life much as they did hundreds years ago. Governed by the rise and fall of the African sun and the illusive cycle of the rains, simplicity and struggle are the dominating themes of daily life for many Maasai people. Before the break of day, women wake to begin their routine of building a fire, milking cows, goats, and sheep, and making *chai*, a hot drink of sugared tea and

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<sup>37</sup>Interview with Salash Ole Morompi at Mara Simba Lodge, 7 June 2001. The Swahili word *shuka* is the same as an *ilkarash*, a flowing toga-like wrap.



milk. Older boys take the animals for grazing and water. Men go to gather with other age mates for fellowship and discussions of issues pertaining to their herds, community, and families. Women continue their day by fetching water, gathering firewood, repairing homes, working with bead craft. Nowadays, some children in the villages go to school from early in the day until late and many of the women will travel into a trading center or town to market their beads or sell cups of soured milk (*kule naaisamis*) which they transport in calabash gourds (s: *olpukuri*, pl: *ilpukurto*). This money is used to purchase beadwork supplies, basic food commodities, colorful cloth wraps, and to pay school fees. The day ends much as it began; the animals come home to women and older girls ready for milking. At dark, the men close off the entrance of the village with acacia thorn branches to protect the animals and people inside from predatory nocturnal hunters. A fire and a simple meal; then conversation and laughter ensues over more *chai* until each woman extinguishes her small lamp and the village rests.

### *Traditional Maasai Homes*

A historic, traditional village, one in which many Maasai live today, (s: *enkang*, pl: *ekangi*) is a family group of several husbands and their wives who decide to live together in a community (Fig. 9). This affords the advantage of sharing labor among many, added protection, and an enjoyable, communal life. On the right hand side of each entrance to a village resides a man's first wife; on the left, the second; further from the entrance on the right, next to the first wife, resides the third, and so on. A Maasai man does not have a home of his own, per se, but stays with each wife as he desires and as he determines best for both the having of children and the keeping of domestic tranquility among his wives. The individual

homes in a village are low, oblong stick-framed structures coated with a mixture of dung and mud. Inside there is a room for small animals leading on to a larger room with several cow hide covered bed areas (Fig. 10). The only ventilation is from the main door and a few small holes in the exterior wall which are mostly kept plugged with a cloth or skin.

The following diagrams with accompanying photographs depict a typical layout of a Maasai village and individual homes currently existent and in use today. Of particular note are the two sets of photographic pairs of the traditional Maasai homes at the end of the series. In the first set (Figs. 11 and 12), explorer Thomson provides a lithograph of a Maasai village near Mount Longonot in the *Ewuaso Kedong* from his expedition of 1882; below it, a photograph taken by the writer in the very same area in 1982. Although the time between the images spans one hundred years, the scenes are virtually the same.<sup>38</sup> The next pair of photographs (Figs. 13 and 14) provide a closer view of a village home. The first, a traditional home in the 1940's, and the following photograph a traditional home in the late 1980's.<sup>39</sup> A period of forty years separates these images, but the essential home construction and even the appearance of the people surrounding the home have changed very little.

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<sup>38</sup>Thomson, *Through Masai Land*, 418 and Strang, *Photographic Archive*, EwuasoVillage1982.jpeg.

<sup>39</sup>Huxley, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, 94 and Strang, *Photographic Archive*, CeremonialVillage1989.jpeg.

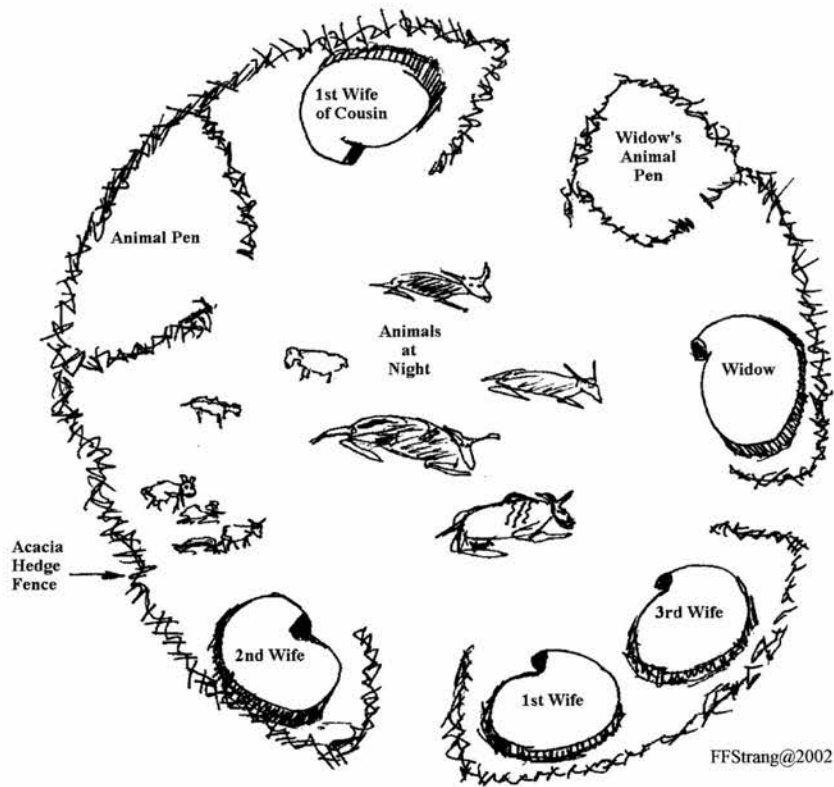


Fig. 9. Typical Maasai Village (*enkang*) Arrangement.

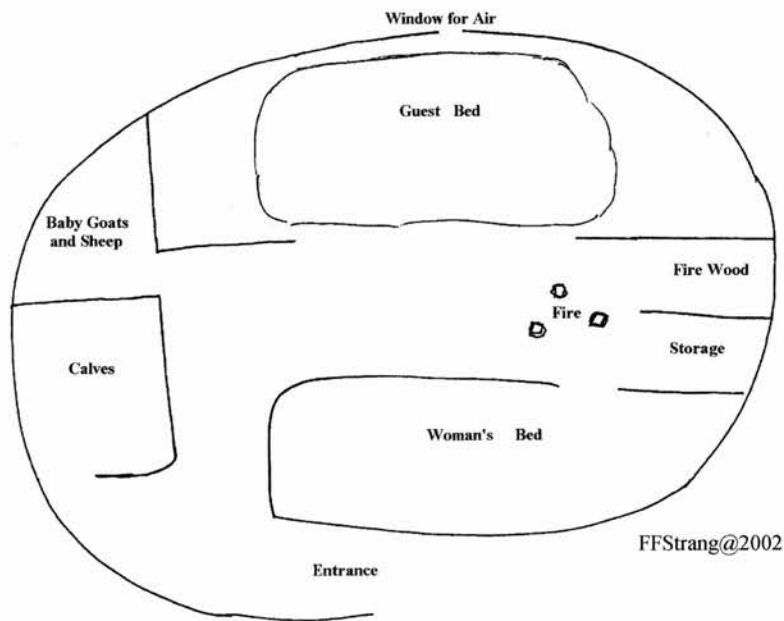
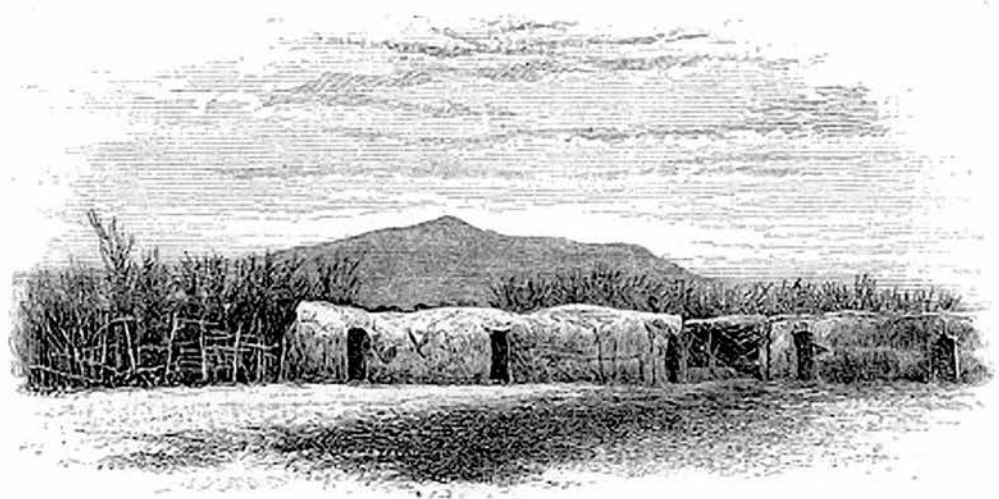


Fig. 10. Typical Traditional Maasai Home (*enkagi*) Floor Plan.



MASAI KRAAL, D. LONGONOT IN DISTANCE.

Fig. 11. Maasai Village in the *Ewuaso Kedong* (1882).



Fig. 12. Maasai *Enkang* in the *Ewuaso Kedong* (1882).



Fig. 13. Maasai Home Around 1940.



Fig. 14. Traditional Maasai House (*enkagi*) (1989).



*Contemporary Maasai Homes and Culture*

In recent years, the government of Kenya began a program of land division among the Maasai. This program sought to divide all lands into sections that were given to individual families in each geographic area. These families, in turn, could sub-divide their land giving portions to their sons. More than any other event in the history of Maasai people, land demarcation has changed their way of life. As Salvadori and Fedders point out, "The concept of individual land ownership is alien to the Maasai."<sup>40</sup> Twenty years ago, the writer was hiking back to the *Olosho-oibor* village after a pastoral visit to a nearby home and came upon a warrior watching his cows. After eating the news (*ainos ilomon*), the inquiry was made, "Who owns the land on which your cattle are grazing?" The proud warrior gave an incredulous, piteous look before turning back to his cattle uttering one word, "*Enkai*" (God). It is incomprehensible for ones with such a view of the land to consider having a title deed to a certain number of acres. Other tribes have capitalized on Maasai misunderstandings of this issue and purchased prime Maasai lands for their own cultivation and commerce. Many Maasai sellers, thinking they could just move, found fences in areas they had once freely roamed and so became landless.

A 1989 *New York Times* article detailed the new venture in farming undertaken by a Maasai family in Tanzania and warned of the difficulties the entire people face as both the governments of Kenya and Tanzania try to forcibly settle and restrict Maasai nomads. A Maasai Roman catholic priest working near *Loibersoit*, Father Fred Oloishiro, worries about Maasai families settling down to homestead on individually titled land parcels when their entire society bases itself on the nomadic

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<sup>40</sup>Cynthia Salvadori and Andrew Fedders, *Maasai* (London: Collins, 1973), 9.

lifestyle stating, “They (the Maasai) find life changes drastically and they find themselves in a paranoid situation.”<sup>41</sup>

In this changing Maasai culture, those who have understood the land division scheme have a different life. Instead of a group of families gathering in a village to share labor and enjoy companionship, many individual families fence their allotted acreage, downsize their herd, build a permanent house, and start to experiment with agriculture. At his home near *Najile* in the *Ewuaso Kedong*, which had both an animal husbandry operation and a sizable planting of maize and beans, Joseph Nkuito affirmed the arrival of changing times: “Maasai will have to make some changes to survive nowadays. Only animals will not work. They must have *shambas* (gardens) and even a business of some kind in addition to animals.”<sup>42</sup> At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most Maasai settlements near trading centers or towns are ones of this individual pattern. There are still many traditional village arrangements in rural Kenya and Tanzania, but, even in those areas, there are some individual homesteads.

The following three examples and correlating photographs illustrate the changing homes and lifestyles of contemporary life and culture. Figure 15 shows Nancy Sakuda, wife of PCEA Maasai evangelist Peter Sakuda, in front of her home.<sup>43</sup> Nancy, a Kikuyu, is an expert farmer and sold corn and beans to buy *mbati* (tin) sheets for the roof of her house. For the exterior walls, Nancy utilized a traditional construction method of a stick frame with rock fill, over-coated with

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<sup>41</sup>James Perlez, “The Masai's Fate: Fenced In At Last?” *New York Times* (International), 16 October 1989.

<sup>42</sup>Interview with Joseph Nkuito, near *Najile*, 20 May 2001.

<sup>43</sup>Cecily Strang in Strang, *Photographic Archive*, NancysHouse1989.jpeg.

mud. A protective live thorn hedge surrounds Nancy's homestead and she has a separate pen area for animals at night.



Fig. 15. Nancy Sakuda's Home (1989).

In photograph on the next page (Fig. 16), traditional Maasai, Elizabeth Pulei (l) and Paulina Sakuda (r), sit to do their beadwork on the cement floor of Paulina's house.<sup>44</sup> Paulina saved the proceeds from her bead sales to have the cement slab put in as well as to purchase *mbati* (tin) sheets for the roof and exterior walls of her house and bought wood for the interior room divisions. In addition, Paulina has a 3,000 gallon rain tank and a gutter system to catch rainfall off the tin roof and a two-acre garden adjacent to her house. She also keeps her small herd of animals in a pen next to her house. Another family member has a home in Paulina's compound as well. The families share daily labor responsibilities. In a 2002 visit to Paulina's

<sup>44</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, PaulinaBeads1988.jpeg.



homestead, there were additions of painted insulating wallboards on all interior surfaces, a front porch, and western-styled furniture. Paulina reported that she had sold many beadwork items and so was able to finance the changes.



Fig. 16. Elizabeth, Baby Demas, and Paulina (1988).

In following photograph (Fig. 17), Emmanuel Nkuku (l), PCEA evangelist, and his wife constructed a *mbati* (tin) house on their tract of land near *Nkito* while his sister (r), residing on the same property, built two traditional Maasai homes adjacent to Nkuku's home.<sup>45</sup> Emmanuel keeps his animals in a barbed wire and wooden fenced enclosure a short distance from his house. They also have a small garden of inter-cropped beans and maize. Emmanuel's wife teaches in the church sponsored primary school while his sister tends to domestic duties around the homestead. The difference in dress is apparent and depicts changing Maasai culture: Nkuku and his wife don western wear while his sister chooses traditional clothing.

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<sup>45</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, Nkuku1993.jpeg.

Nkuku's situation illustrates the changing dynamic of Maasai culture in the geographic area of the study. Contemporary Maasai culture often finds families living between the two worlds of traditional custom and modern practice.



Fig. 17. Emmanuel Nkuku, His Wife, and Sister Showing Traditional and Contemporary Houses and Dress (1993).

Many Maasai people are now exploring new ways of living while many, especially in more remote areas, continue to live in a very traditional manner. In contemporary Maasai culture, regardless of whether families live in a traditionally constructed house and village or a modern one, Maasai people are still vitally connected to their traditional community rites, ceremonies, and initiations.

### *Maasai Rites and Ceremonies*

In order to illustrate the richness of Maasai culture and further understand their heritage, it is helpful to briefly consider rites and ceremonies. Fundamentally linked to their religious beliefs, these are often watershed events in the lives of men and women, and children. Because of the relationship to traditional Maasai religion, the value of these ceremonies in relation to Christian worship will become apparent in subsequent chapters. Previously mentioned were the major Maasai rites having to do with passages in a person's life.<sup>46</sup> However, there are several other Maasai rites and ceremonies that go hand-in-hand with the formal age passages.

The Ox of the Wounds ceremony (*olkiteng' loo lbaa*) is a purification ritual often conducted before a major rite of passage in order to cleanse villages, leaders, and participants of injuries done to others. The Ox of the Wounds involves the sacrifice of a black ox, singing, prayers, and a ritualistic cleansing ceremony with olive branches. As two prominent scholars have attended and recorded descriptions of this ceremony in recent years, and as anecdotal evidence from the writer's conversations with many Maasai leaders indicate, The Ox of the Wounds may be considered a ceremony that is still part of contemporary Maasai culture.<sup>47</sup>

Another ceremony, The Horn of the Ox (*enkibungata e mowuo*: the catching of the horn or *em bolata olkiteng*: the holding of the horn or simply *e mowuo*: the

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<sup>46</sup>For detailed information regarding the specifics of these age passages refer to: Saitoti, *Maasai*, which has individual chapters devoted to the various age-set passages and Sankan, *The Maasai*, particularly chapters 5 ("Initiation and Graduation") and 6 ("Age Grouping") and Mol, *Language and Culture*, Maasai life-cycle chart, 246-248.

<sup>47</sup>Mol describes his experience attending the Ox of the Wounds ceremony in *Maa Dictionary*, 37; in addition, Doug Priest describes this ceremony as well as numerous others in his book on the subject of Maasai ceremony and sacrifice, *Doing Theology with the Maasai* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1990), 66.





horn), is unique among the *Keekonoykie* tribal section as it is the ceremony inaugurating an age group. Boys of a certain age are gathered, shaved, and proceed to catch a ceremonial ox by the horn with the first boy to catch the horn receiving special acclaim. This animal is ceremoniously slaughtered, roasted, and eaten. Certain boys are selected as age group leaders and the entire group moves forward to their next passage event, circumcision and the becoming of initiates (*olaibartani*). Following the *Keekonoykie* Horn of the Ox ceremony, other tribal sections proceed with their own preparations for circumcision, usually in the form of the special dance, *enkipaata*. The Horn of the Ox ceremony and the subsequent *enkipaata* that occurs throughout the clan section establish an age division and move a group of youngsters on toward initiation into junior warrior status. The Horn of the Ox ceremony is one belonging to both the historic and contemporary worlds of the Maasai people. My wife, Cecily Strang, and I participated in part of this ceremony in 1989. At that time, we lived in a Maasai village at the base of the *Ngong Hills*. We had developed significant friendships with a number of Maasai families and were considered, as much as is possible, to be part of their community. When the son of one of Cecily's close friends was to go through this ceremony, we were invited as special guests. In the following photograph (Fig. 18), taken during the ceremony, Cecily and Nancy Sakuda share the task of cutting up the meat for roasting.<sup>48</sup> Nancy's son, Samson, was one of the young boys banded together to begin a new age group.

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<sup>48</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, CecilyNancyHornofOx1989.jpeg.



Fig. 18. Nancy Sakuda and Cecily Strang at Horn of the Ox (1989).

The warrior period in a young Maasai's life is nostalgically said to be the best time of his life. Tepilit Ole Saitoti offers a first person account of his unique and exciting experiences as a Maasai warrior in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Saitoti writes, "Roaming the plains with other warriors in pursuit of girls and adventure was a warrior's pastime. We would wander from one settlement to another singing, wrestling, hunting, and just playing."<sup>49</sup> In this period, strong young men enjoy the freedom of living and roaming together in the bush, protecting villages in their geographic area, learning the ways of their people from the elders, singing, dancing, eating, drinking, looking for potential girls to marry. In former time, cattle raids and battles with other non-Maasai tribes were part of their task as

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<sup>49</sup>Tepilit Ole Saitoti, *The Worlds of a Maasai Warrior: An Autobiography* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1986), 71.

well. Although governments now forbid many of the more violent and provocative acts of the warriors and curtail the time allowed to such life passage, Maasai warriors still have the honor and reputation of brave and fearless fighters. In fact, though outlawed, raids and skirmishes continue.<sup>50</sup>

Both past and present groups of warriors often go from village to village in a specified ceremony called *olamal*, simply translated, a delegation. A delegation (*olamal*) may consist of a number of groups, not only warriors. Elders can go about in a delegation (*olamal loo payiani*: delegation of elders) to right wrongs, bring news, discuss views and decision making, socialize, or pray. Young boys form a delegation (*olamal loo layiok*: delegation of boys) to garner support from the elders in order to begin the circumcision process for a new age set. Women also have delegations such as a wedding delegation and procession (*olamal lenkiyama*). The delegation of women (*olamal loo nkituaak*) is often one where Maasai women dress in their finest and go to villages singing and dancing in order to collect supplies and animals for an upcoming ceremony or event. In the warrior delegation (*olamal loo murren*), an entire warrior group comes to the village with great pageantry and display. The warriors sing and dance for the assembled village trying to outdo one another in the height of their vertical jumps. In the village, the warriors enjoy honey-beer, and, often today, bottled sodas, and meat while flirting with the young women and perhaps garnering a few animals to take with them back to their warrior encampment (*e manyata ool murren*).

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<sup>50</sup>During an extended church leadership training trip in 1993, I learned of the government of Kenya prosecuting a group of warriors for a cattle raid. Police found out about this raid through the warrior's own songs about themselves and their recent exploits that were field recorded and broadcast as an indigenous music special on the Voice of Kenya (VOK) radio. Local police heard the song, investigated, and arrested the men.

As warrior ceremonies in particular are diminishing in frequency, it is important to commit what we do know of their recent practices to record. This will also assist in a later chapter by looking at ways traditional Maasai culture may be integrated with Christian worship practice. The following photographs (Figs. 19 and 20) show a warrior group during an *olamal* delegation at the village of *Olosho-oibor* in 1982.<sup>51</sup> The rhythmic movements of the men during their marching into the village were impressive to all. Women and children of the village followed the procession of warriors with great excitement, anticipation, and unbridled enthusiasm. The entire village assembled to see and hear these ostentatious showmen. The ecstatic singing, dancing, and jumping of the warriors shows clearly in this photograph.<sup>52</sup> The men cover their heads with ochre (*e reko* or *olkaria*), a substance smeared on the body consisting of a powder made from particular soft stones mixed with animal fat and/or water. The warriors are dressed in their fine cloth wraps and fine beads and carry several items unique to their office. The warrior depicted in the photograph (Fig. 20) has a fine beaded breastplate (*osaein loolgoon*), a dark-colored wooden staff (*esiare narok*), and a fly whisk (*olkweteti* or *oleinyuaa*).<sup>53</sup> After this group of warriors finished a lengthy period of singing and dancing for the village, they received an invitation to eat with the village elders. The warriors stayed several hours eating, talking with the elders, flirting with the village girls, and playing with the children before departing with gifts of several animals.

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<sup>51</sup>The author was working with the Presbyterian Church in the *Olosho-oibor* area at the time of this *olamal* and had the privilege of experiencing this event.

<sup>52</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, OlamalDance1982.jpeg. Note these warriors also carry a long, slender, lightly colored herding stick called an *engudi*.

<sup>53</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, WarriorOlosho1982.jpeg.



Included in the appendix is a compact disc with a recording of the singing that took place at this very same *olamal loo murran* in 1982.<sup>54</sup> Listening to this *olamal* music gives the hearer another sense of the diversity and richness of Maasai culture. The entire existence of *moran* in contemporary Maasai culture faces an uncertain future and will most likely be redefined in light of government restrictions.

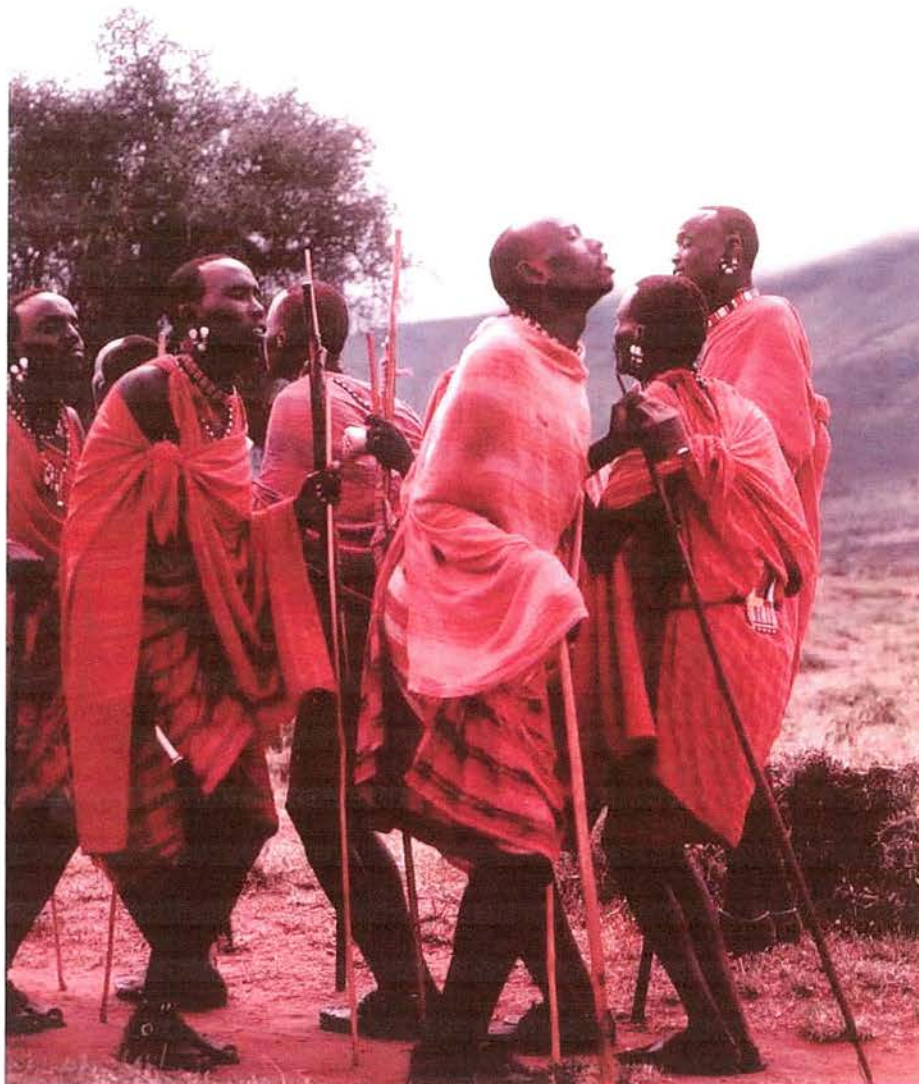


Fig. 19. Warriors Dancing at *Olosho-oibor Olamal* (1982).

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<sup>54</sup>See Appendix 1 for instructions for locating *olamal* music, Olamal82.wav.



Fig. 20. Warrior at *Olosho-oibor* (1982).

There are at least two ceremonies that occur toward the end of the warrior phase of a man's life: the Raid of the Brisket (*enjore e nkiyieu*) and the Calves of the Spit (*ilasho loo nkamulak*). The Raid of the Brisket is ceremony preparing warriors to enter into their role as elders. After ceremonial slaughtering and eating of oxen with special attention to sharing the brisket among themselves, the warriors and their special elder representatives return to the ceremonial village. Singing and

dancing awaits them along with a special blessing and a ritualistic drink of milk and cow blood reminding the warriors that it is time to put aside their carefree life and get ready to assume the responsibilities of leadership.<sup>55</sup> The final warrior ceremony before moving into the next life-stage, the Calves of the Spit, involves the giving away of ten calves and ten blankets to the oldest of the special elder representatives of this particular circumcision group of warriors. This is a ceremony of blessing and thanksgiving for all the activities of this age group and the wisdom gained by them from their elders. After the Calves of the Spit, warriors become elders in a rite of passage called *olngesher* (literally a grid of green twigs on which to roast meat).

In the book, *Maasai*, Saitoti describes the *olngesher* ceremony and Beckwith provides excellent photographs.<sup>56</sup> In short, this passage event, full of ritual and ceremony, moves an age group into elder status. Some years after this passage event, the tribal group holds a final ritual focusing on the short stool (*olorika*) on which Maasai elders sit. At this event, elders receive a blanket, often gray in color (the *Keekonoykie* Maasai use a light reddish-brown blanket) and have their stools and their elder status blessed.<sup>57</sup> Elders then enter the work given to them by their people as head of their village, sentinel of the passages of their children, guardians of a circumcision group, counselors for warriors, decision-makers on the regional council of elders, and participants and leaders in rites and ceremonies of their people. The following photographs show a *Keekonoykie* elder with his blanket

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<sup>55</sup>For an excellent and detailed description of this ceremony see, Mol, *Language and Culture*, 165-166.

<sup>56</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 184 and 226-246.

<sup>57</sup>Mol, *Language and Culture*, gives a very detailed description of the *olorika* ceremony offering a side-by-side translation of the description of this event, 315-317.

(Fig. 21) and a group of elders on their stools in council (Fig. 22).<sup>58</sup>

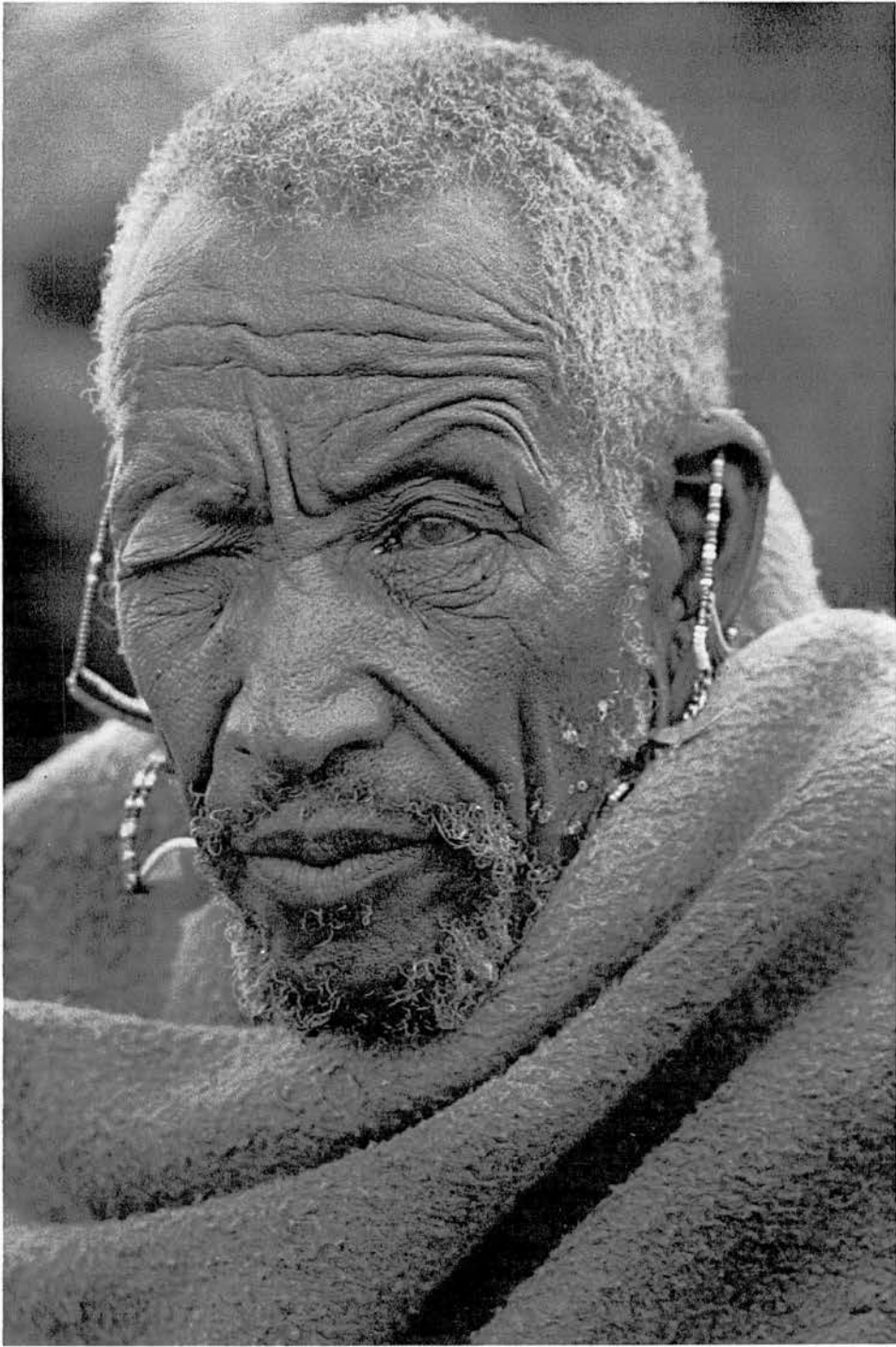


Fig. 21. Elder with Blanket (1982).

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<sup>58</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, ElderOlosho1982.jpeg and EldersOnStools1988.jpeg.





Fig. 22. Maasai Elders in Council on Stools (1982).

There are ceremonies and rituals for women although generally much less prominent and much less in the public eye. Most of these events revolve around the role of women in male-dominated, Maasai society. Since the general life passages of women were noted earlier, two ceremonial events specifically directed to women are now described: marriage and fertility rites. Traditionally speaking, it is the goal of Maasai women to be married and to have many children. Practically speaking, even today, it is only in the care of her husband and in the rearing of children that she has the insurance and security of care when she is old. Today, there are numerous groups working with Maasai women in attempts to lessen this dependency and encourage the development and achievement of women. This is especially true among young girls many of whom have to be married to men much older and subsequently do not have a chance to pursue anything other than her role in the traditional patriarchal life. Maasai traditional marriage rites are still an important and meaningful element in the life of women. Once a man decides on a woman he

wants to have as a wife, he exchanges gifts with the other women of the bride-to-be's family, brews honey-beer for the men, and discusses the prospect with the bride-to-be's father and his age-mates. After agreements and the payments of animals and other items by the man are completed, the father of the girl kills a ram to obtain its fat with which he anoints his daughter. She is then dressed in her finest, blessed and instructed by her father and other village elders after which she is led to her new village by her husband and another elder whom he has selected. The new bride lingers behind her new husband and makes a show of sadness for the village she leaves. Arriving at her new village, the women come out to meet her and honor her with gifts of milk and cows of her own. She then builds her home on the appropriate side of her husband's entry gate and remains part of his family the remainder of her life. The following photograph (Fig. 23) conveys the timeless, elegant beauty and steadfast determination of Maasai women and continues to represent the current, common manner of dress and adornment for most Maasai women in the geographic area of this study.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, SaikeriWomen1982.jpeg.



Fig. 23. Maasai Women Singing (1982).

The having of children is of ultimate importance to Maasai women. Saitoti refers to a common Maasai blessing, “May God give you children, may God give you cattle.”<sup>60</sup> From his perspective as a Maasai man, Saitoti believes that, while both cattle and children are of incredible value in Maasai culture, children are of ultimate value. He writes, “Maasai love children,” and explains how important and valued children are in Maasai culture.<sup>61</sup> There are many prayers of lament for barren women. In addition, there is a ceremony of fertility. Doug Priest records a case

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<sup>60</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 49.

<sup>61</sup>Saitoti, *Maasai*, 49.



study of such a rite among the *Matapato* Maasai which occurred in October 1986.<sup>62</sup> This shows the continuing importance of a historic cultural value remaining through change and melding into contemporary Maasai society.

In this particular case, a fertility ceremony (*oloiroshi loo nkituaak*) took place. Priest renders this phrase, *oloiroshi loo nkituaak*, as “holy gathering of women,” which is understandable if one takes the word *oloiroshi* to mean “weighty” or “serious.” However, a more linguistically accurate and culturally relevant translation is literally based. *Oloiroshi* is from the verb *iroishi*, to be heavy with child; *inkituaak* is the plural of *enkitok*, woman; therefore, the phrase *oloiroshi loo nkituaak* may be rendered “the becoming heavy with child of the women.” This particular ceremony was significant partly in the fact that it involved over five hundred Maasai women gathering for several days and partly in the prayer-blessing each woman received. Considering the vital role women play in the daily life of a Maasai village, the importance of over five hundred women attending shows the entire community’s support of the Maasai cultural value of having children.

In this particular event, a series of three rites transpired in the ceremony as a whole. The first two were ritualistic calls to repentance and cleansing from evil with the final rite being the fertility focus. In this third rite, assisting men took an unblemished, black, pregnant heifer holding it still for women to adorn it with beads and jewelry. Then the men killed the heifer by suffocation, bled, cut up, and roasted it. They carefully removed the uterus and placed it on a dried skin. The helpers carefully drained the amniotic fluid and added it to a honey-beer, milk, and fat

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<sup>62</sup>This brief case study summary is detailed in Priest, *Doing Theology*, 193-209. Also, Mol recorded a similar ceremony that occurred in 1976 with eight hundred seventy-six women participating in Mol, *Maa Dictionary*, 172-173.

mixture. While this was ongoing, other men made braided vine necklaces, one for each woman. Over five hundred Maasai women gathered in a single file line began to sing and proceeded into the ceremonial area where the leader of the ceremony and her helpers anointed each woman with the liquid mixture. Each woman received a vine necklace and a leather strap made from the hide of the sacrificed heifer and a blessing from ritual experts who said, “Get children” (*embung’a enker*) or “Become many” (*taa entaa kumuuk*). All women then sat down and a number of elders took honey-beer or milk from gourds into their mouths and sprayed the women with a fine mist. At this point, the men, backing out of the ceremonial area traditionally blessed the women and the rite concluded.

Maasai rites and ceremonies are intrinsically connected to their religious beliefs. In fact, to a Maasai it is ridiculous to speak of a separation of the activities of life and religious practice. Unlike most folks steeped in western culture, Maasai people do not separate and compartmentalize their experiences into physical, mental, and spiritual realms. Maasai have a holistic approach to life that encompasses all experiences in a broad brush-stroke of continuity. Recognizing that most readers of this thesis do in some way compartmentalize their thinking, I move on to consider Maasai traditional religion, but in so doing, emphasize that separation of life, ceremony, and religion does not necessarily follow Maasai cultural conventions.

### Maasai Traditional Religion

#### *Enkai Onchula: God and Prayer*

Maasai traditional religion has different characteristics from many other East African people groups. Both historically and in contemporary cultural expression, the Maasai are strongly monotheistic in their view of God, *Enkai*. They do not

believe in the existence of ancestral spirits. Doug Priest writes, "The Maasai simply do not have a detailed eschatology that reserves a special place for ancestral spirits. When asked about a person who has died the Maasai will simply say, 'He or she is no longer here,' or 'He or she has gone away.'"<sup>63</sup> Generally, Maasai culture discounts witchcraft and mystical powers as overly superstitious. *Enkai* is the creator of all that is and has selected Maasai people as his group for special favor. Maasai, especially women, pray to *Enkai* often. The wrath of *Enkai*, evident by violent storm, drought, or other natural calamity, is often associated with *Enkai's* displeasure over an action of an individual or group. *Enkai* is part of everything in life. Traditionally, upon death, a select group takes the body out into the bush where wild animals feed upon it. Since there is no belief in life after death or ancestral preeminence, Maasai view this practice as part of the natural cycle of life. As Maasai culture changes, more burials are taking place both within the Christian community and in the growing secular society.

Previously cited authors whose works pertain directly to the Maasai, include descriptions of Maasai traditional religion and views of *Enkai*. One summary of the Maasai conception of God follows:

God (*enkai*) is everywhere, in the sky (*enkai*) and the rain (*enkai*), bringing grazing for the cattle and generally providing for the food chain of all living things. However, God is also in the hazards of the bush that threaten life, ranging from unexpected encounters with animals to diseases that take their toll and spread in an erratic course. It is God's judgment that is invoked in a curse and it is God's inscrutable will that is decisive. In this way, God has a terrible as well as a benign aspect....God is seen as a powerful moral force and

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<sup>63</sup>Priest, *Doing Theology*, 101. The Maasai are unique in their cultural lack of ancestral presence distinguishing them from many other African peoples for whom the veneration of ancestors is crucial. See: Saitoti, *Maasai*, 195, Margaret Sharman, *People of the Plains* (London: Evans Brothers, 1979), 22, and James Cox, *Rational Ancestors: Scientific Rationality and African Indigenous Religions* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1998).

appears to have many of the highly respected attributes associated with extreme age, only more so. But no-one can know God's age or shape or sex, they say. God is inscrutable, and only God knows.<sup>64</sup>

In Maasai traditional religion, there are two aspects of God: *Enkai norok*, the black aspect of God, and *Enkai nanokie*, the red aspect of God. It is said that when there is prosperity and happiness in the villages then the black nature of God is blessing the people, but, when there is famine, drought or death, it is God's red nature that is angry. In Maasai culture, black stands for life and well-being as it is the color of the dark rain clouds that bring the blessing of rain on their land to grow grass for their animals. Donovan confirms this when he writes, "For the Masai, there is only one God, *Engai*, but he goes by many names. Sometimes they call him *male*, sometimes *female*. When he is kind and propitious they call him the black God. When he is angry, the red God. Sometimes they call him rain, since this is a particularly pleasing manifestation of God. But he is always the one, true God."<sup>65</sup> Also, hunting guide Oskar Koenig noted it in the 1930's, "Seated on his throne high up on the peak of Oldonje Lengai, from where his thundering voice could so often be heard, the great Ngai was the deity responsible for good and evil, penalties and favours, fruitfulness and destruction."<sup>66</sup>

For Maasai people, *Enkai* is accessible through prayers of individuals and of the community. A typical Maasai prayer for the community goes as follows:

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<sup>64</sup>Mohamed Amin, Duncan Willetts, and John Eames, *The Last of the Maasai* (London: Bodley Head, 1987), 48-49.

<sup>65</sup>Vincent Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered: An Epistle from the Masai* (London: SCM Press, 1978), 42. Donovan's spelling of Maasai words is slightly different than Mol's, especially when writing the "ng" diphthong, "ch," and "k" sounds. In this paper, I have used spellings of Maasai words as found in Fr. Frans Mol's dictionary except where local derivations were widely used.

<sup>66</sup>Oskar Koenig, *The Maasai Story* (London: Michael Joseph, 1956), 40.

Oh God, grant that we may live in peace.  
 Give us health,  
 And protect our wives and children.  
 Bless us with rain on our heads,  
 And prosper us by giving water to man and beast.  
*Naai tadamu iyiook !*  
 God, remember us!<sup>67</sup>

Another example of prayer conducted in the Maasai community, but which has individual implication, is the prayer sung by women who would like to have children. The having of children is vital for women in Maasai society as it insures economic provision for her family by providing extra hands for the village labors and provides security for herself in her old age, as her children will look after her. The *osiombe* is a prayer song that accompanies the Maasai ritual for fertility.<sup>68</sup> Finally, an example of an individual prayer is one delivered by women, usually at the end of the day, as they are milking their cows. The *osinkolio loo inkishu* (cow song) is a prayer sung by women to *Enkai* giving thanks for their cow which has been taken care of and has come home safely to provide milk for her family. In the writer's estimation based on twenty years of observation, there are fewer and fewer women who sing cow songs while milking and caring for their animals. On one such rare occasion in a village in the *Ewuaso Kedong* area, the older, first wife began singing. She was pleased at the interest in her singing and allowed recording of her prayer song.<sup>69</sup> In her song, she praises God for the safety of her herd and their

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<sup>67</sup> Amin, *Last Maasai*, 178. The author chose to render this prayer in the English language, with the exception of the last line, *Naai tadamu iyiook*, which is a common colloquial prayer often heard in daily Maasai life.

<sup>68</sup> See detailed treatment of *o siombe* songs: Doris Wagner-Glenn, *Searching for a Baby's Calabash: A Study of Arusha Maasai Fertility Songs as Crystallized Expression of Central Cultural Values* (Ludwigsburgh: Phillip Verlag, 1992).

<sup>69</sup> See Appendix 1 to locate the recording of this unique *osinkolio loo inkishu* (Cattle Song) on the accompanying compact disc, *CattleSong89.avi*.

return from the day and thanks God for the cow she is milking, in particular, that it is healthy and gives such good milk. Although diminishing in contemporary Maasai culture, this cow song is a current example of a historic practice still in use.

*Oloiboni: The Traditional Spiritual Leader*

Another important way in which Maasai interact with *Enkai* is through the work of the tribe's spiritual and ceremonial leader, *oloiboni*, the loibon. The *oloiboni* is a ritual expert and a diviner who comes into the position through family inheritance.<sup>70</sup> There can be several *iloibonok* practicing among different Maasai clans simultaneously. The *oloiboni* is considered a mediator between *Enkai* and the people and is an important part of any ceremonial activity in traditional Maasai society. A Tanzanian Maasai oral tradition tells of the origin of the *oloiboni*. *Naiteru-Kop*, considered the mother of humankind, lived in a pristine garden having many children but without a mate.<sup>71</sup> She greatly admired the moon. *Enkai* told *Naiteru-Kop* she must choose between the moon and one of her children. When she chose the moon because she thought she could have more children, *Enkai* was angry and made all human mortals subject to death. The descendants of *Naiteru-Kop* were the Maasai (herds-people) and Dorobo (hunters) who lived in paradise. The Maasai, being *Enkai*'s chosen people, received cattle from heaven descending on a strip of hide. Because the Maasai disobeyed and the Dorobo did not listen, *Enkai* was angry and sentenced them both to struggle in life. The Maasai was sorry and prayed until *Enkai* promised to send a spiritual leader. Kidong'oi was sent and became the first

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<sup>70</sup>Mol, *Maa Dictionary*, 104.

<sup>71</sup>For further details on Maasai narratives see: Solomon Ole Saibull, *Herd and Spear: The Maasai of East Africa* (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1981). See also the stories of creation at the beginning of Chapter Two, pages 21-23.



great *oloiboni*, the Loibon Kitok. Loibon Kitok used a horn from a spotless bullock to throw pebbles on a hide and so tell the future.

The role of the *oloiboni* is varied in Maasai culture. The *oloiboni* is viewed as a diviner, a healer, a religious leader, an official at ceremonies and rituals. The *oloiboni* communicates with *Enkai* to receive messages when ceremonies are to be held and then announces this to the clan after long consultations with the elders. The *oloiboni* usually presides at ceremonial and ritual functions of the group. The following photograph (Fig. 24) depicts a respected *oloiboni* carefully watching over a complex ceremony.<sup>72</sup> His cleanly shaved head is the mark of a rite of purification conducted before the ceremony. He sits with authority on a three-legged stool (*olorika*), wrapped in a red blanket, a favorite color and pattern of the *Keekonyokie*.

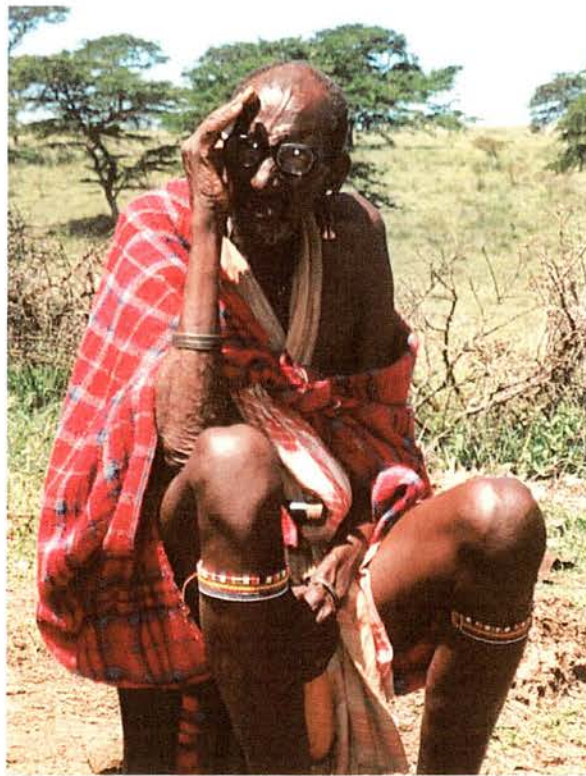


Fig. 24. *Oloiboni* Presiding at *Esiaai Ore Enker* (1989).

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<sup>72</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, oloiboni1989.jpeg.



The various ceremonies held in Maasailand are in many ways an act of traditional religious practice. In each of the predominant ceremonies, circumcision (*emurata enkipaata*, actually named after the dance the young boys do prior to circumcision itself, *aipak*), becoming a warrior (*eunoto*), the period of being a Moran and life in the *manyata* (including *olpurda*, strength soup and meat eating), the transition to being an elder (*olngesher*), the feast of the great ox (*loolbaa*), and the fertility ritual prayer song (*osiombe*), the blessing of *Enkai* is invoked and expected.

### *Playing Games*

These ceremonial activities are often full of celebration and serve as a general affirmation of the community. Maasai author Ole Saibull points out that “however solemn, no Maasai ceremony is without humor.”<sup>73</sup> Many Maasai exhibit joy, happiness, and a fun-loving spirit. The following photographs show a group of warriors enjoying a game called *enkeshei* (or *bao*, borrowed from the Swahili word for wood and referring to the wooden playing board), a fast-paced game of strategy where the object is to take your opponents stones by landing in juxtaposition to him on a board (or the ground) with parallel indentations. In some areas, the men refer to the stones as *enkishu* (cattle) and the object becomes capturing your opponents herd! The first photograph (Fig. 25) comes from the 1940’s while the second (Fig. 26) was made in 1988.<sup>74</sup> In addition to such formal games, Maasai have a great penchant for quips, anecdotes, and trickery.

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<sup>73</sup>Ole Saibull, *Herd and Spear*, 77.

<sup>74</sup>Huxley, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, 94 and Strang, *Photographic Archive*, *enkeshei* 1988.

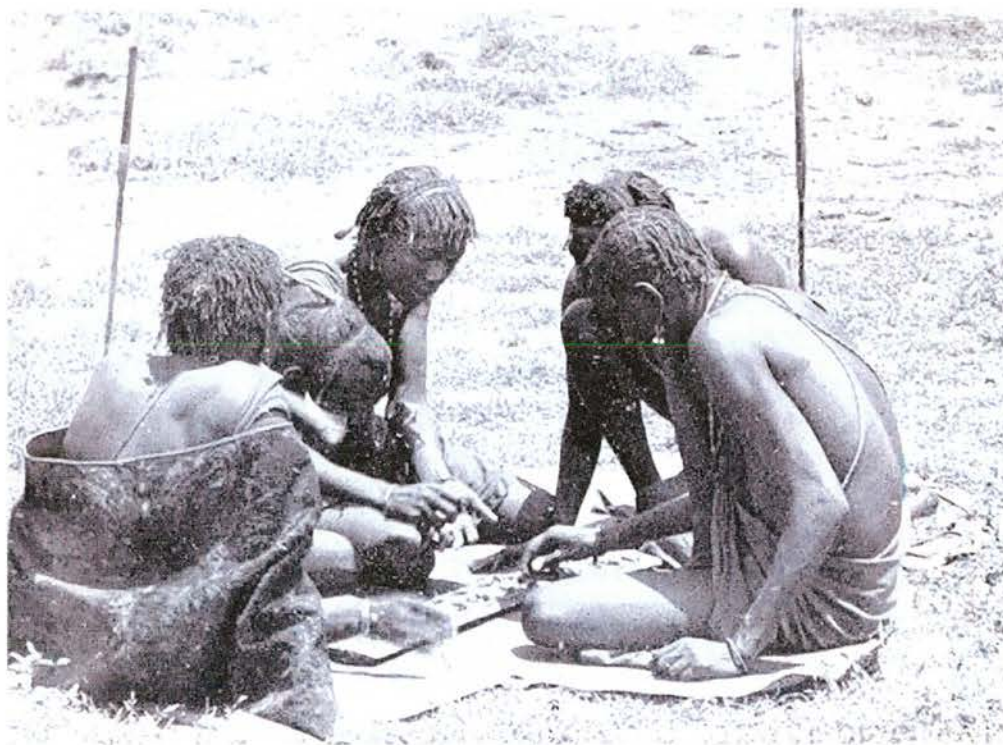


Fig. 25. Warriors Playing *Enkeshei* (circa 1940's).



Fig. 26. *Enkeshei* in Ewuaso (1988).



As Maasai culture changes, the interest in game playing remains high. Maasai people in the geographic areas of this study have been influenced by gaming activities from outside of their cultural experience. Many Maasai men, especially those near trading centers and small towns, learn to play darts at the local bar. The ubiquitous football can now be found anywhere there is a school. Where no proper ball is available, youth make one by rolling vines tightly in a circle until they have a ball shape. At the 2002 PCEA Maasai evangelist's seminar, the attendees enjoyed playing an electronic sound matching game called *Bop-It* (Fig. 27).<sup>75</sup> Also, the writer has witnessed the card game, *Uno*, being played for hours by some of the most traditional of Maasai men. With the addition of new forms of playing games, the telling of jokes, the playing pranks, and the robust enjoyment of most any game, the historic Maasai tradition of having fun and enjoying levity continues to be an important part of contemporary Maasai culture.

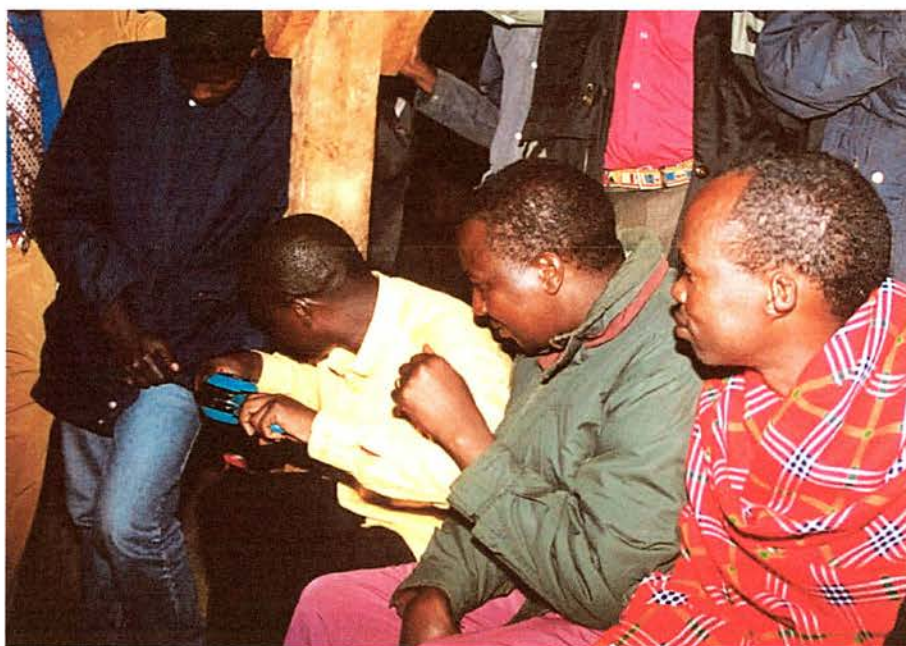


Fig. 27. PCEA Maasai Evangelists Playing *Bop It* (2002).

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<sup>75</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, BopIt2002.jpeg.

*Food Significance and Olpul*

Animal sacrifice and the eating of meat and drinking of honey-beer, milk, and blood are all important ritual elements of various ceremonial activities in both historic and contemporary practice.<sup>76</sup> In his interesting analysis of food customs among the Maasai, Kaj Arhem observed the role of animal sacrifice in the various ceremonies of the people. "Indeed, the sacrifice and ritual consumption of meat are perhaps the deepest expression of Maasai religious life....This brings us to the core of Maasai food symbolism. Milk unifies men with cattle; meat unifies men with God. By drinking milk, men symbolically become cattle; by eating meat, they become one with God."<sup>77</sup> In addition, it is common at most Maasai rites and ceremonies to have the brewing and enjoying, often to excess, of honey-beer.

In the younger generations of today, especially for those men who did not go through the warrior period of life, drinking beer and eating meat often occurs in the trading center and small town bars and restaurants. In 2001, upon the conclusion of a significant church leader training event, a group of Maasai evangelists accompanied the writer to Nairobi's Carnivore restaurant, known for its famous fire roasted meats. At the conclusion of our meal, several men, with great satisfaction said approvingly, "*Olpul sidai!*" (A good meat-feast!). In each of the small towns that border the east of the *Ngong Hills* and the edge of the geographic area of this study, *Ngong*, *Kiserian*, *Olepolos*, and *Ongata Rongai*, there are signs advertising *Olpul* (meat feast) to be had at certain bar-restaurants. In contemporary Maasai

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<sup>76</sup>A treatment of Maasai animal sacrifice and Christian faith was undertaken in Doug Priest, *The Problem of Animal Sacrifice Among Maasai Christians* (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1989).

<sup>77</sup>Kaj Arhem, "Maasai Food Symbolism: The Cultural Connotation of Milk, Meat, and Blood in the Pastoral Maasai Diet," *Anthropos*, vol. 84 (1989), 20 and 22.

culture, many still do experience traditional forms of feasting and drinking in the villages and bush areas around their homes, while more and more are finding this expression outside of their home communities in trading centers, towns, and cities.

### *Reconciliation and Life's End*

In all human relationships, there are times when an offense occurs. When this happens in a Maasai community resolution must occur, as they are utterly dependent on one another in their pastoral lifestyle. Both the offended family and the offending family come to reconciliation through a prescribed rite. Each family prepares food and brings it to the center of the village. This special food is called *endaa sinyati* (holy food). The community gathers around these families who exchange food with each other as prayers are said. Both families eat the *endaa sinyati*. The village believes this initiates *osotua nejuk* (a new covenant) which restores relationships. One can view this as a rite of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Another rite of forgiveness and reconciliation is *esiaai ore enker*, the Work of the Ram.<sup>78</sup> In 1989, when a prominent *Olooseos* area family member was killed accidentally in a fight with man from another Maasai family, something had to be done to avoid armed conflict. Rather than deteriorating into an all out battle between the families, the *oloiboni* met with the elders of the two families and helped them work out their grievances through the *esiaai ore enker* ceremony. A ram has special religious significance in Maasai traditional religion as a vehicle of purification and cleansing. A ram is often sacrificed to bless a marriage or for other ceremonial events requiring purification. In this particular ceremony, the father

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<sup>78</sup>My family and I received an invitation to be special guests at this ritual in 1989 when the brother of one of our Maasai friends was killed.

whose son was killed gathered all his living children to receive recompense from the offending family. His wife who bore the one killed received an unblemished, extra large, dark brown ram, and went away to her house. Each son, brothers of the slain man, then received a number of animals from the offending family. The *oloiboni* and the father directed and observed the proceedings from high atop a rock ledge. The *oloiboni* blessed the families by prayer to *Enkai* declaring reconciliation achieved. Then to conclude the ceremony, the families joined together in a meat feast.<sup>79</sup>

In historic Maasai culture, life as well as death is governed by *Enkai*. Acknowledging the difficulty of their life, Maasai know that death is a frequent occurrence, even today. There is no traditional belief in after-life, ancestral spirits, or reincarnation. The only exception to this is a view that occasionally an *oloiboni* may return as a snake. Amin summarizes the historic position well, "The last rites for the dying are virtually without ceremony....Life ends insignificantly and in all cases the body is left out for the scavengers. To bury the dead is considered dishonourable."<sup>80</sup> There is at least one, albeit rare, exception to Amin's position. On a rare occasion, when a village absolutely must move because of drought or grazing lands, an elderly person, because of sickness or lack of mobility, may not have the ability to travel with the group. In such a case, the village blesses the elder one and departs, leaving behind the infirm to the fate of the bush. Sometimes, this elder one will recline on his or her cowhide bed and die. In the writer's journeys, there have been numerous warnings not to go exploring in abandoned Maasai

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<sup>79</sup>Photographs documenting the *esiaai ore enker* ceremony included on the CD. See Appendix 1.

<sup>80</sup>Amin, *Last Maasai*, 103.

villages for fear of perhaps discovering a corpse. As mentioned earlier, the emerging practice in contemporary Maasai culture is becoming burial, whether under the auspices of the Christian church or not. This is especially true in regions near developed areas. Nevertheless, the historic practice of leaving the dead in the bush is still practiced in more remote or traditional villages where nomadic movement occurs.

Maasai traditional religion is full of rich traditions and ceremony. It employs all aspects of their culture, from energetic and ecstatic dancing at *eunoto*, to initiate instruction through oral tradition at *olpul* and *emirate*, from great feasts of meat at *olpul* and *loaolla*, to quiet songs of prayer in *osiombe* and *osinkolio loo inkishu*. The historic traditional religious practices of Maasai people, many of which are still exercised today, offer a reflection of the vibrant life of this people.

#### Challenges of Changing Maasai Culture

The intersection of Christianity and traditional Maasai religion is often a challenge. Christianity interacts with Maasai traditional religion in both complementary and conflicting manners. The primary theological grounding of both is monotheism. The Maasai have a core belief from traditional religious practice that *Enkai* is one and that *Enkai* is Creator of all things. In addition, traditional Maasai belief sees *Enkai* as good and benevolent, even though anger and punishment are also part of the nature of *Enkai*. For the Christian missionary and indigenous church leader, these points offer a segue into the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Conflicts of traditional Maasai religion with Christianity mostly revolve around the *oloiboni* and cultural practices deemed unacceptable by the Christian church. In some cases, the *oloiboni* may sense a threat to his spiritual role



and influence in the society. In other situations, Christianity and its association with education and modernization is criticized by some Maasai elders as an unwelcome agent of change.

Briefly, one example of the challenge Christianity poses to Maasai traditional life and religion is the concept of Christian marriage. The issue of monogamy in Africa has confronted every age of missionaries. For the purposes of this study, it is helpful to note the policy of the PCEA regarding this matter. Acknowledging the situation of the largely unevangelized Maasai people, the PCEA does not require a man, upon conversion to Christianity, to divorce all wives but one. The requirement is that the new convert refrain from taking any additional wives. For younger generations, the PCEA encourages single Christian men and women to live in a monogamous relationship. The myriad of issues relating to this topic cannot be covered in the scope of this study. In a changing Maasai culture of land demarcation with homesteading slowly taking the place of collective villages and fewer superior grade animals usurping the numerous traditional Maasai herds, the practice of Christian marriage will continue to be shaped by these and other factors.<sup>81</sup>

After a careful and thorough analysis of the Maasai situation at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Berg-Schlosser writes, "Today Maasai culture is at a crossroads and it remains to be seen whether they will actually 'go under,' as Governor Charles Eliot predicted at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, or whether some viable alternatives (such as different forms of individual or group ranching) can be found which would allow them to adapt themselves to a more modern way of life while

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<sup>81</sup>For further insight into the missiological issues surrounding marriage in Africa see: Eugene Hillman, *Polygamy Reconsidered* (New York: Orbis, 1975), especially Chapter 1 dealing with the missionary history as it relates to African polygamy and Chapter 2 exploring the cultural presumptions of the western world.

still preserving their ethnic identity and some of the more important elements of their cultural heritage.”<sup>82</sup> At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the same sense of uncertainty prevails in the minds of scholars and the Maasai people themselves. Yet, as evidenced by their continued existence, the Maasai people are determined survivors who may very well be able to use their adept skills at adapting to their harsh physical environment to find their way in a modern Africa. Much more could be said about the Maasai people, but, for the purpose at hand, it is helpful to keep in mind that the Maasai are a proud, strongly traditional, semi-nomadic herds people, highly skeptical about the changes in their way of life and uncertain of their place in a rapidly changing East Africa.

The final photograph in this chapter (Fig. 28) illustrates well the challenges of a changing culture.<sup>83</sup> Both young men are of the same Maasai family, in the same age group, and live in the same village, however, the one in traditional dress is in the junior warrior training stage while the one wearing a school uniform is a student. These young men are growing up experiencing two vastly different situations. The value of history and tradition, the forces of change, and the reality of modernization create a climate of tension and challenge for the Maasai. Most Maasai people living in the geographic areas represented in this study exist in a delicate and difficult position between the two worlds of traditional, historic Maasai culture and contemporary Africa.

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<sup>82</sup>Berg-Schlosser, *Tradition and Change*, 248.

<sup>83</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, TwoWorlds.jpeg.

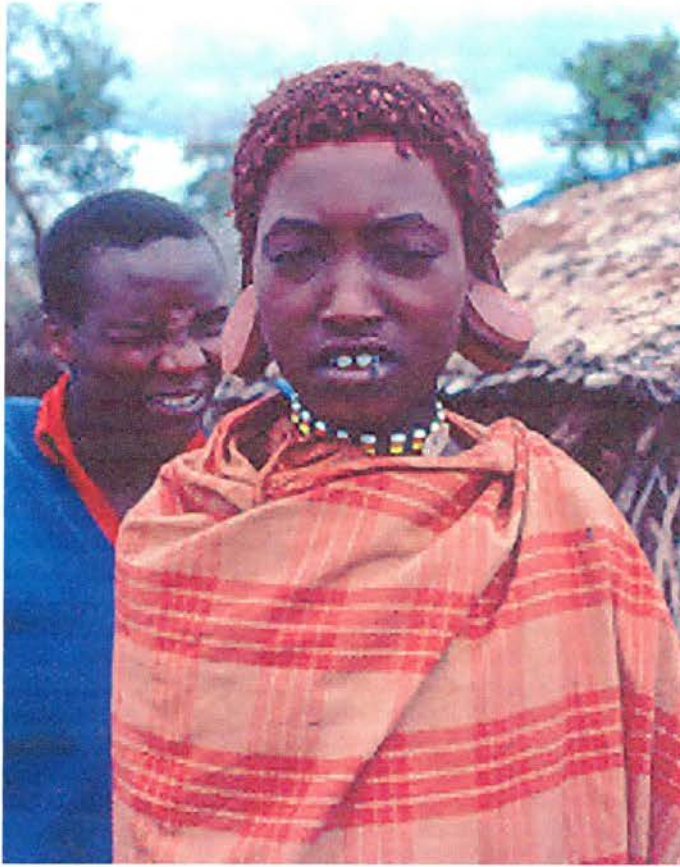


Fig. 28. Traditional and Contemporary Lives of Two Young Maasai Relatives (1982).

### CHAPTER THREE

#### MAASAI CHRISTIANITY AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

##### *The Expansion of Christianity Among the Maasai*

##### *Historical Encounters*

The earliest Christian missionary contacts in Kenya were by the Roman Catholics. In 1498, Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived at Malindi. Several Roman Catholic missionaries were on his ship and, although they did not stay at Malindi, they made several contacts which were important initial steps to paving the way for later missionary efforts. In 1542, pioneer Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier stopped at Malindi on his way to India and spoke with local Muslim leaders. By 1597, Augustinian friars working in Mombasa were claiming 600 African converts. The Catholic mission movement in Kenya later faltered until a resurgence of interest by both Catholics and Protestants was ushered in during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, called “The Great Century” by Latourette because it was a period unlike any yet seen in the spread of the Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

In 1844, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) sent Johann Ludwig Krapf, a German Lutheran missionary, to Mombasa. There were many difficulties in these early days of pioneer missionary work including one recorded hostile encounter with the Maasai where a couple from the United Methodist Mission was speared to death

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), 1063-1334.

by raiding Maasai as they moved inland with the Gaua people at the Tana River. In 1875, the CMS established Freretown just north of Mombasa to serve as a Christian colony for freed slaves. Freretown was named after Sir Bartle Frere who was a British special emissary to Zanzibar and advised the CMS in selecting an appropriate site and method for such a settlement.<sup>2</sup> In 1882, Joseph Thomson led an expedition for the Royal Geographical Society which resulted in the earliest formal work describing Maasai people, the previously mentioned *Through Masai Land*.<sup>3</sup> By 1890, there were about 2,000 baptized Anglicans in Kenya in addition to a smaller number of Methodists in Kenya.<sup>4</sup> To this point, there had been little Christian advance into Maasai territory.

In 1902, the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee was thinking of evangelization among the Maasai and reported,

The Masai...are fair, open, and fearless in war, and possess a dignity and self-respect of which any nation might be proud. In Joseph Thomson's days they must have possessed enormous strength and great extent of country. The Kikuyu were like an island in the midst of a Masai sea. Famines, however, have reduced their power, so that they enjoy but a fraction of their former greatness; in fact, they were in 1892 almost exterminated.<sup>5</sup>

This near annihilation was due to a combination of a severe drought, rinderpest in cattle, and a series of smallpox epidemics. Church of Scotland records indicate this

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<sup>2</sup>Roland Oliver, *The Missionary Occupation of East Africa* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1952), 19-26.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Thomson, *Through Masai Land* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1885).

<sup>4</sup>E.M. Wiseman, *The Story of the Church Missionary Society in Kenya* (London: CMS, n.d.).

<sup>5</sup>Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee, "Report to General Assembly, 27 May 1902," in *Kikuyu Mission, East Africa: 1891-1908* (Edinburgh: R & R Clark, 1908), 17.

epidemic among the Maasai with outbreaks in 1899 and 1900. The hospital records of Kikuyu Mission Station from 9 January 1900 confirm a smallpox epidemic among indigenous people around Kikuyu.<sup>6</sup>

Advances in the propagation of the Gospel in Kenya as a whole are astounding. In 1900, 5,000 of Kenya's 2,900,000 people were professing Christians (0.2%), but, by 1970, 7,141,800 were Christians out of 11,247,000 (63.5%) and, by 1980, 11,452,200 were Christians out of a population of 15,688,000 (73%).<sup>7</sup> In the 2001 edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, David Barrett lists a figure of 23,859,839 professing Christians in Kenya or 79% of the total population of 30,080,000 with an astounding projection that by the year 2025, 82% of the nation will be professing Christians.<sup>8</sup>

Christian expansion among the Maasai, however, has been much slower. For example, by 1962, 60% of the Kikuyu people were professing Christians, 79% of the Luo, 69% of the Gusii, and 57% of the Kipsigis, but only 19% of the Maasai. Ten years later, in 1972, total professing Christians ranked 73% in the Kikuyu tribe (13% increase), 89% of the Luo (10% increase), 82% of the Gusii (13% increase), 68% of the Kipsigis (11% increase), but only 22% (3% increase) among the Maasai.<sup>9</sup> In his most recent statistical research, Barrett lists the Maasai and their Samburu cousins as peoples most resistant to conversion with 78% of the Maasai population in Kenya

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<sup>6</sup>See: *Kikuyu Mission*, 17 and "Early Days at Kibwezi and Kikuyu," *Kikuyu News* 3 (May 1908), 12.

<sup>7</sup>David Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 2001), vol. 1, 425-431.

<sup>8</sup>Barrett, *Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, 426.

<sup>9</sup>David Barrett, ed., *Kenya Churches Handbook*, (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1973), 181.



practicing traditional religion and in neighboring Tanzania, the number of Maasai ethnoreligionists is 86%.<sup>10</sup>

While there have been many advances of Christianity in Kenya, they have not been made without mistakes and setbacks. One of the many problems that emerged was the demand of missionaries and mission societies for a complete change of African tradition and culture upon conversion. Westerners brought a different value system and set of customs and many missions viewed Christianity and African traditional culture as being diametrically opposed. Disillusioned African Christians began to speak out and by the 1930's most missions were considered anti-African. African separatist churches began to break away from the mainline missions and formed African independent churches. One factor contributing to these breaks and pertinent to this study was the conviction that Africans should administer, lead, and direct the Church. A climactic point of this movement was PCEA General Secretary Reverend John Gatu's call for a moratorium on foreign resources, personnel, and funds in the early 1970's.<sup>11</sup> Throughout this Christian advance, missionary work among the Maasai was minimal. Nevertheless, works of notable significance came through efforts of the African Inland Mission's (AIM) Kijabe Mission Station, the Catholic work in Narok, and the Scottish Presbyterian work at Kikuyu.

The record of scripture in their language confirms the overall lack of Christian presence and mission among the Maasai. A portion of the Gospel was available in the Maasai language in 1905 and the entire New Testament in 1922, but

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<sup>10</sup>Barrett, *Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, 427 and 729.

<sup>11</sup>*Uhuru and Harambee: Kenya In Search of Freedom and Unity* (New York: IDOC International, 1975), 95.

the total sales to 1971 amounted to only 396 New Testaments. The Kikuyu sales to 1971 totaled 103,069; the Luo 72,644; the Gusii 41,660.<sup>12</sup> Of course, the population of these groups varies enormously, so the real meaningful statistic comes from extrapolating the data into a ratio of portions of scripture to number of people. In 1972, there was at least a portion of translated scriptures distributed for every 23 Kikuyu, for every 23 Luo, for every 18 Gusii, but for only every 433 Maasai. The expansion of Christianity among the Maasai people has been markedly slower than with other indigenous peoples in the region.

In the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a growing interest and emphasis on Christian outreach to the Maasai. Several western para-church groups actively engaged in Maasai mission work and renewed efforts by mainline denominations commenced. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century begins, such efforts continue. While a thesis of this scope cannot examine each group, it will seek to identify pertinent church and para-church links at appropriate junctures as they bear upon examining the work of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa among the Maasai. At this point, examination turns to the historic Kikuyu Mission Station of the Church of Scotland; how it assisted in Christian expansion; how it shaped the way PCEA Maasai Christians experienced worship; and how it continues to influence the practice and experience of worship today.

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<sup>12</sup>Barrett, *Kenya Churches Handbook*, 98.

*The Scottish Mission at Kikuyu*

This section considers the influence the Church of Scotland had on Maasai perception of Christian worship through their Kikuyu Mission Station. While it is commonly said that Presbyterian missionary work among the Maasai had its beginning with the establishment of the Masai Rural Development Centre at *Olooseos* in the early 1960's, I contend that from the onset of Presbyterian missionary involvement in Kenya, the Maasai have been heavily influenced by a foreign, formal form of Christian worship to the extent that their potential indigenous contribution to worship was devalued. This is evident by proof of Maasai participation in the work and worship at the Kikuyu Mission which I now document through missionary descriptions of worship form and practice at the Church of Scotland mission as well as photographic record of Maasai at Kikuyu.

In 1891, the Church of Scotland began its missionary endeavor in Kenya at Kibwezi, some 200 miles inland from Mombasa. This was a joint venture between the private business sector and the church and was called the East African Scottish Mission. Two members of the Imperial British East Africa Company envisioned the establishment of a private mission in the heart of the territory they were administering for the government. The Kibwezi Mission established itself quickly and even made contact with the Maasai as evidenced by a report dated 1897, where it is noted, "Masai boys sent down from Kikuyu are spelling their way through Luke's Gospel in Kiswahili."<sup>13</sup> However, all encounters with the Maasai at Kibwezi were not this pleasant.

The Maasai had already established a fearsome reputation from the very

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<sup>13</sup>*Kikuyu Mission*, 9.

outset of Presbyterian work in East Africa as it is recorded in the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee minutes of 23 April 1901 that “the first doctor, Dr. Charters, perished in the wilderness in 1894, probably killed either by lions or by a wandering band of the Masai.”<sup>14</sup> Dr. Charters, the project superintendent, and an acquaintance, Mr. Coquhoun, left the station on 17 September 1894 for a few days of shooting, but were never heard from again. In the subsequent search and investigation, it was determined that a large group of Maasai warriors were in the area where the doctor and his friend were going. After weeks of searching and exploring all possibilities, a conclusion was reached which attributed their deaths to the Maasai. “In view of the strictness of the subsequent search, the supposition that Dr. Charters and his companion were victims of some sudden onslaught by beasts of the jungle is discredited, for in such case some vestiges of clothing, the gun, or bones, would surely have been discovered. Stanley (Henry Morton) favoured the theory that they had been attacked by Masai and probably dispatched there and then, or died subsequently in captivity.”<sup>15</sup> After a series of serious misfortunes and hardships, the mission relocated ten miles north of Nairobi near Dagoretti and established the Kikuyu Mission Station in 1898 under the interim supervision of Rev. Thomas Watson of the Church of Scotland.

The mission station site in the Kikuyu highlands was situated in a fertile region and was a natural border area between the Kikuyu and Maasai, offering accessibility to both peoples. For the next two decades, the Kikuyu Mission developed under the direction of three prominent missionaries, David Clement Scott,

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<sup>14</sup>Minutes located in *Kikuyu Mission*, 8.

<sup>15</sup>“Early Days at Kibwezi,” *Kikuyu News* 104 (June 1928), 31.

Henry Scott, and John Arthur. There were many developments in agriculture, medicine, education, and evangelism. A model farm began with agricultural training available to the local community; a very active health clinic, as noted earlier, saw many patients; classes in church membership, as well as English reading and writing were initiated; village-to-village pastoral visitation and evangelistic preaching occurred with regularity; and the mission station itself became the center of Presbyterian Christian worship.

In 1920, the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland requested that the General Assembly establish Kirk Sessions and a Presbytery in Kenya. This was approved and enacted and the first meeting of the Presbytery of the Church of Scotland in Kenya was held on 11 October 1920. In 1936, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved the establishment of the Overseas Presbytery of the Church of Scotland in Kenya that had as its constituency the European ministers and elders from Scotland who were at work in the colony. The Church of Scotland viewed this division of the African Church from the European Church as a step towards the establishment of an autonomous church that occurred in 1943. The European and African churches were finally brought together in a historic union on 11 February 1956 to form what is now known as the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>For further historical information on the Church of Scotland in Kenya and the PCEA see: R.G. Calderwood, *Kenya Colony* (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee, 1947), 35-43, and R.A.G. Macpherson, *The Presbyterian Church in Kenya* (Nairobi: PCEA, 1970).

*The Influence of the Kikuyu Mission Station on Maasai People*

Dr. D.C. Scott was the first Church of Scotland appointed director of the Kikuyu Mission Station (Fig. 29).<sup>17</sup> Scott prepared an extensive report for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1903 in which he included a sizable account about the Maasai. In fact, on the cover of the report, Dr. D.C. Scott placed a photograph of Maasai warriors at the Kikuyu station providing evidence of interaction between the Kikuyu Mission and the Maasai people from the Station's very beginning (Fig. 30).<sup>18</sup>



Fig. 29. David Clement Scott.

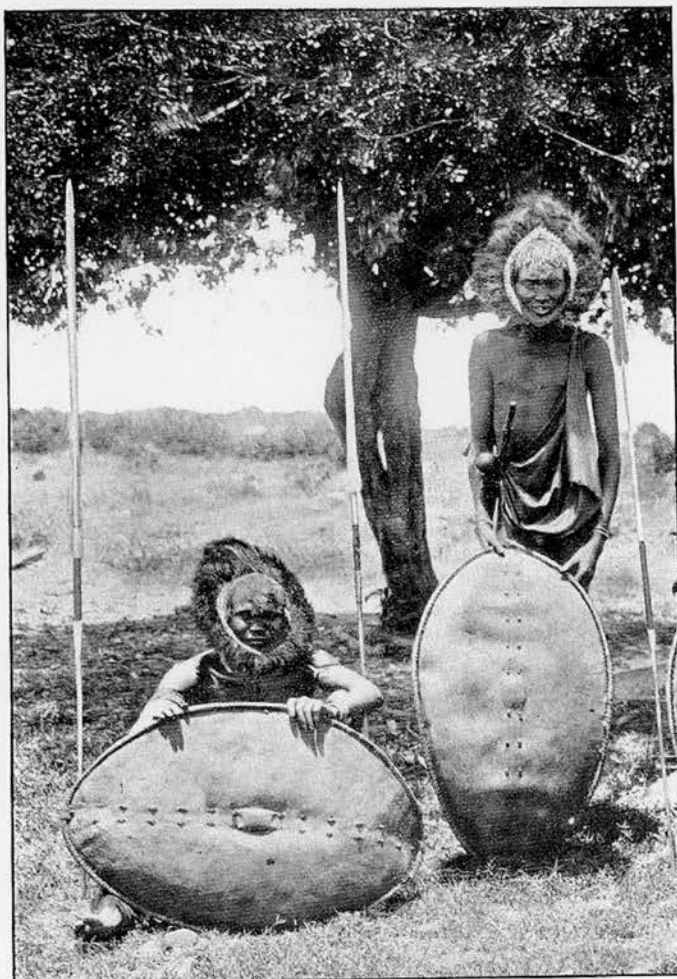
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<sup>17</sup>“In Memorium of D.C. Ruffelle Scott” in *Kikuyu Mission*, 43.

<sup>18</sup>“Masai Warriors at Kikuyu,” cover of Dr. D.C. Scott’s report “In the Highlands of Kikuyu” in *Kikuyu Mission*, 43.



31 May 1904 43  
*Dr Ruffell Scott's Report in full for 1903*  
 IN THE  
**HIGHLANDS OF KIKUYU**  
*(sold at The General Assembly of 1904)*



MASAI WARRIORS AT KIKUYU.

Fig. 30. Maasai Warriors at Kikuyu (1903).

In a 1907 letter, D.C. Scott comments on missionary linguist Arthur Barlow's ability with languages, and states, "Barlow is invaluable—you must keep him. He is the only one who has any gift for language. He would be the man for the Masai. We are collaborating translation and grammar and dictionary. He is already tackling

Masai.”<sup>19</sup> This note clearly shows the connection of the Kikuyu Mission with the Maasai people as, by 1907, a language study was being undertaken, indicative of the interaction of Maasai in the Kikuyu Mission. Ensuing pages further show that the interaction of Maasai with Scottish Presbyterian missionaries working at Kikuyu significantly impacted a cross section of Maasai ages, stages, and genders.

The Kikuyu Mission employed Maasai to cut stones for the construction of the station’s church. A lantern slide address on the Church of Scotland Mission at Kikuyu prepared by Dr. John Arthur in 1911 shows clearly an image of Maasai warriors quarrying stones for the Kikuyu Mission.<sup>20</sup> In addition, Dr. D.C. Scott describes the following image of his Maasai employees:

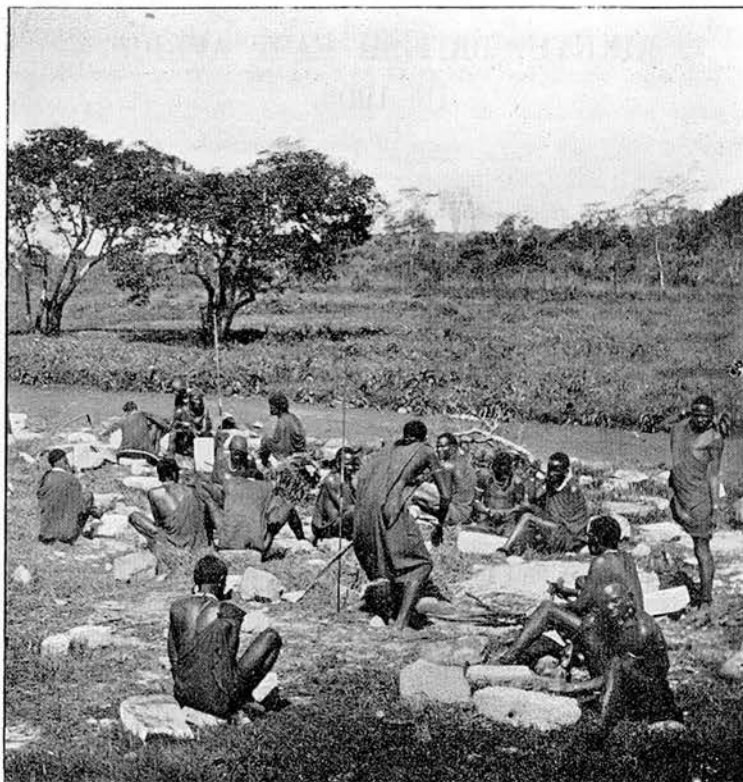
We had a band of ‘red men’—young warriors. The red colour comes from native paint, or iron rust mixed with sheep fat. This mixture is smeared over head and face and limbs. The hair is done carefully and is similarly stained, and tied into strange knots and tufts, and they carry the inevitable Masai spear. A dance of these warriors in literal war-paint and costume, in perfect rhythm, and united motion, display and jumps, is most picturesque. The plumes and waving wands and song accompaniment are striking, and seem to carry them into the spirit of it as one man. Yet, these men have come month after month for nine or twelve months at a time to sit from seven o’clock to five with short rest between, cutting stones and chiseling ornamental mouldings.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>D.C. Scott, “August’s Reference 1907,” manuscript, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, D. 66. Although the language formation Scott used in this note may not seem correct to the reader, it is, in fact, a verbatim rendering of his manuscript.

<sup>20</sup>Slide no. 45, lantern slides, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, F. 21 (1911), F. 22, 23, 24 (1926).

<sup>21</sup>“Dressing Stones for Kikuyu Church,” D.C. Scott, *Highlands*, 5.



DRESSING STONES FOR KIKUYU CHURCH.

Fig. 31. Maasai Laborers at Kikuyu (1911).

The point of observing this Maasai labor is the exposure these warriors (*ilmurran*) had to western forms of Christianity. At this juncture in the Kikuyu Station's history, there were many opportunities to observe worship. The usual Sunday services were, of course, attended by many, but, for these Maasai employees, their experience of Scottish Christianity came during the work week. Each workday there were several services of worship conducted in the English language at first and then integrating the Kikuyu language as the missionaries acquired ability. The first service was held at 7:00 a.m. consisting of solemn reading from the Scriptures and prayer for all the workers on the estate. A more formal 9:00 a.m. worship service for the entire station plus any visitors followed. Finally, an evening worship service at 8:30 p.m. for the station and those who were attending

any evening classes concluded the day. Because of the Mission's requirement for its workers to attend daily services, it may be held with certainty that these Maasai stonecutters were exposed to many hours of Scottish Presbyterian worship.

It was not only the warriors who visited Kikuyu. In 1907, Dr. John Arthur took up the director's post at Kikuyu. In his first report to the Church of Scotland, after only three weeks, Arthur includes a prominent photograph (Fig. 32) of two Maasai women who had come to the Station's clinic for health services in 1903.<sup>22</sup> It can be further demonstrated that the Sunday worship services of the Kikuyu Mission were also attended by Maasai people. In Rev. Henry Scott's letter upon his arrival at Kikuyu in January of 1908 to assume the role of station minister, the presence of Maasai at the worship services is evident. He writes, "On Sunday morning there was an unusually large gathering of natives at the morning service....The people, as they sat in and around the uncomplicated church building, formed a most picturesque group. The amount of oil and red paint smeared over the bodies of these men and women amazed us..."<sup>23</sup> The abundant daily use of ochre singles out the Maasai as well as Rev. Henry Scott's later reference to a Maasai spear. We can therefore be certain that some Maasai people witnessed the Sunday services of worship at Kikuyu from the Mission's very beginning.

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<sup>22</sup>Maasai Women at Kikuyu (1903), *Kikuyu Mission*, 88.

<sup>23</sup>*Kikuyu News* 1 (March 1908), 4.



MASAI WOMEN AT KIKUYU.

Fig. 32. Maasai Women at Kikuyu (1903).

The first church building at the Kikuyu station had the look of a simple British country church. The western influence on worship that was practiced at Kikuyu is evident by a brief account of the furnishings for the new building. In planning for the church, there was to be an ornately carved baptismal font, specially made chancel steps, a memorial stained glass window, and furniture from Britain.<sup>24</sup> On 28 January 1909, the church building at Kikuyu was dedicated. Rev. Dr. Henry Scott described the church and its contents in a letter to supporters in Scotland. Its construction and contents were largely western as it had a spire, stained glass

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<sup>24</sup>*Kikuyu News* 3 (May 1908), 9-10.

windows in the chancel, cathedral glass in all the windows, a carved communion table, silver communion vessels, a brass book stand, a brass collection plate, an ornately carved Glastonbury chair for the chancel, a reading, recording, and prayer desk, a large pulpit Bible, a silver baptismal cup which went in the finely hewn stone baptismal font, and a full-toned organ.<sup>25</sup> The interior and exterior of the church can be examined in the following two historic photographs (Figs. 33 and 34) that show the western architecture and decor. The flanking stained glass pieces are original to the church, installed shortly after completion. As far as can be ascertained, original photographs of the glass are not available. It is important to view these recent images, as the glass seems to depict ornamented and draped persons resembling Maasai (compare with Fig. 32).<sup>26</sup> The color photograph (Fig. 35) shows the old church as it stands today. Currently, the church is in good condition and often full of children as it is used as a primary school by the PCEA *Kimuri* church.

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<sup>25</sup>“Dr. Henry E. Scott’s Letters—No. 11 & 12,” *Kikuyu News* 11 (May 1909), 2. In contrast, see D.C. Scott’s definitive attempt to create a more cosmopolitan church with African décor in Blantyre, Malawi, illustrated in Fig. 42.

<sup>26</sup>Exterior from *Kikuyu News* 28 (May 1911), 3 and Interior from *Kikuyu News* 11 (May 1909), 5; flanking stained glass and current exterior photographed by the author, 2002.





Fig. 33. First Church at Kikuyu (1909).

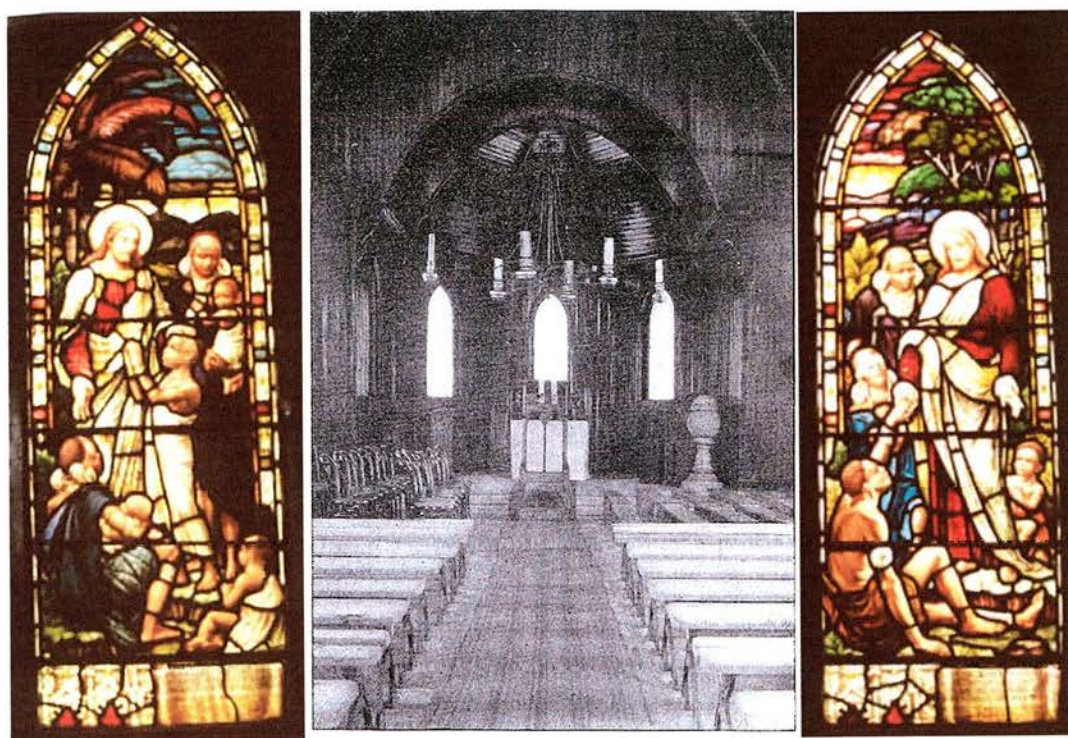


Fig. 34. First Church at Kikuyu, Interior (1909) and Stained Glass (2002).





Fig. 35. Old Church at Kikuyu (2002).

The actual worship services at the Kikuyu Mission were formal copies of that which the missionaries knew from their home churches with only the liturgy being in the Kikuyu language. Dr. George Hunter, an elder at St. George's, Edinburgh, visited the Kikuyu Mission in 1912 and described his worship experience. "The hymn sung in Kikuyu was to the tune of 'There's a Friend for Little Children.' Afterwards one of the Catechumens, as I took him to be, prayed quietly, but evidently fervently, all the others kneeling most reverently."<sup>27</sup> On another occasion, missionary Dr. John Arthur wrote of a worship service, "The hymns were quietly and, in consequence, more tonefully sung than usual, and, as we

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<sup>27</sup>George Hunter, "Notes of a Visit to the Church of Scotland Mission Station at Kikuyu," *Kikuyu News* 35 (May 1912), 3.

knelt in prayer at the close of each address, we sung, as a prayer, that beautiful hymn, 'Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayers,' to the Plainsong Melody number 136 in the Hymnary."<sup>28</sup> While the hymns were translated into the Kikuyu language, the musical forms and service liturgy were predominantly western.

The practice of Christian worship by Scottish Presbyterian missionaries may have varied from country to country and even station to station, but in Kenya it appears there was a common paradigm of western formality. An insightful commentary on the actual practice of worship is a description by missionary A.C. Irvine. Although lengthy, the quotation offers confirmation that near blanket reproduction of Church of Scotland worship was practiced in mission stations in Kenya:

The church service is at 11 o'clock, and when the bell goes, pandemonium begins around the school, for there the mothers leave their babies—no baby being allowed into church. Two mothers are deputed each Sunday to minister to the temporary orphans. The older children are sorted out, and go to Sunday School, which is simultaneous with the service. Today, Mr. Macpherson took Sunday School. Church service I took myself. My wife plays a voluntary in the usual home fashion while I put on a gown, and when I go in the people are all in their places, sitting perfectly quiet. The opening hymn is "Come, children, come to sing." I descend from the pulpit to beat time on the big drum, and the hymn goes splendidly. There are only two or three notes that they cannot get. Then the general confession, and so on through the beautiful service of our African Prayer Book....There is absolute silence and stillness throughout the sermon—a blessed change from what it was before babies were banned—and a close attention which draws out the speaker. The collection follows, and while two of the deacons come up to receive the plates, two others collect bananas, sugar cane and cassava from the audience, and pile them up before the pulpit. As the deacons bring up the plates to me at the communion table, the whole congregation rises and sings the doxology. Then a closing prayer, hymn, and benediction. As they pass out, their eyes meet a blackboard on which someone has written, 'Silence! Do not greet one

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<sup>28</sup>John Arthur, "A Fortnight's Special Service," *Kikuyu News* 37 (August 1912), 11.

another while near the Church.’ And most of the congregation converse, if at all, in hoarse whispers, till at a distance. Our African Christians are very keen on discipline and order in church, and the lateness, wandering in and out to expectorate or converse with friends, which are so characteristic of African services, have entirely stopped. Last Wednesday, my wife and Rev. Solomon were visiting in the villages, and one of the Christian women volunteered the information that she had not been in church last Sunday. ‘Oh, why weren’t you there?’ ‘Because I have a cough, and if I cough the doctor will tell me to stop.’ (This, I may say, is highly probable.) ‘But you could sit near the door.’ ‘But the elder wouldn’t allow me to go out!’<sup>29</sup>

Several key phrases in this account help show the extent of Church of Scotland influence on the new African converts: music played “in the usual home fashion,” the congregation “sitting perfectly quiet” in “absolute silence and stillness,” conversations by the people occurred “if at all, in hoarse whispers, till at a distance,” and negatively viewed behaviors “so characteristic of African services, have entirely stopped.” While the phrase “beat time on the big drum” certainly indicates the presence of an indigenous instrument, it was used, in this instance, to accompany a beloved western hymn, “Come, children, come to sing.” Furthermore, William Anderson’s research indicates that the early Scottish missionaries introduced drums into Kikuyu worship only for the keeping of time. Traditionally the Kikuyu did not use drums in this manner, but rather to accompany dancers with shakers and bells on their ankles. Anderson asserts that the missionaries did not permit the use of drums to accompany congregational singing, only to beat a cadence.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the reference to the “beautiful service of our African Prayer Book” indicates efforts to use the vernacular in worship, but it is simply a direct

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<sup>29</sup> A.C. Irvine, “A Sunday at Chogoria,” *Kikuyu News* 119 (March 1932), 20-21.

<sup>30</sup> Anderson, *Church in East Africa*, 180.

translation of the Scottish Presbyterian liturgy. It is evident that early leadership at the Kikuyu Mission station saw little value in indigenous African culture and thus sought to import the formal worship traditions of their homeland and make these the norm for Christian worship practice in this area.

It was in such a worship atmosphere that the Rev. Dr. Henry Scott “made it known that on Easter Sunday we would call upon them who wished to follow Christ to stand up and renounce all heathen customs.”<sup>31</sup> One of the customs to be given up was traditional dancing, seen by most missionaries as evil. Alexander Allan arrived at the Kikuyu Station in 1908 and recorded his first impressions of a worship service led by Rev. Dr. Scott. It seems the focus of the service was on the condemnation of “the very objectionable ‘dancing’ that is prevalent throughout the villages.”<sup>32</sup> Not all the missionaries at Kikuyu considered indigenous dancing in this pejorative manner. Ronald Lean writes of a dance he attended just outside of the jurisdiction of the Kikuyu Mission. These traditional dances had to be held away from the Mission because an earlier one had been held nearby, but because of “the prompt action of Dr. Scott it was brought to an abrupt close through his sudden appearance in the village and his veto on the whole jollification.”<sup>33</sup> Lean details the beauty of the dance he observed and the joy of the people concluding, “nothing of an objectionable character was to be seen in the dance.”<sup>34</sup>

Nevertheless, the Kikuyu mission required African converts to go through

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<sup>31</sup>“Dr. Henry E. Scott’s Letter—No. 4,” *Kikuyu News* 4 (June 1908), 2.

<sup>32</sup>“Letter from Mr. Alexander Y. Allan,” *Kikuyu News* 7 (October 1908), 8.

<sup>33</sup>Ronald Lean, “A Native Dance,” *Kikuyu News* 14 (October 1909), 11.

<sup>34</sup>Lean, *Native Dance*, 12.



stages of religious development on their journey to full acceptance into the Presbyterian form of Christianity practiced at the station. There was their profession of faith in Jesus Christ to the minister followed by a public profession, a renunciation of their sins and an agreement to give up all customs and traditions that the mission deemed inappropriate. At this point, the converts were admitted as catechumens. Each Sunday thereafter, and other days as required, the catechumens met together to study the Bible. This period of instruction was to last at least two years. At the end of this period, the convert could request to be interviewed by a committee comprised of several mission staff and select Christians from the community who could comment on the candidate's private life. Upon passage through this committee, the catechumen was then to appear before the minister of the mission station and others who were responsible for his or her further spiritual nurture. This meeting was a difficult test of motive, Biblical knowledge, and readiness to face scorn and rejection by peers. If a catechumen passed on all points, he or she was given a date to appear at the church where all the questions were asked again publicly and finally "with solemn vow upon his lips he is baptised."<sup>35</sup>

In the photographs of young catechumens (Figs. 36 and 37) taken in 1912, one can recognize the influence of Scottish Presbyterianism on the indigenous young people.<sup>36</sup> The white, western-style dresses and outfits are indicative of the western perception of Christian worship and ritual being imparted to the new converts. On close examination of the young men (Fig. 37), one can see what is most likely a Maasai young man (front row, left side). The characteristic ear cutting on this boy at

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<sup>35</sup>J. Youngson, "The Catechumenate," *Kikuyu News* 38 (October 1912), 12.

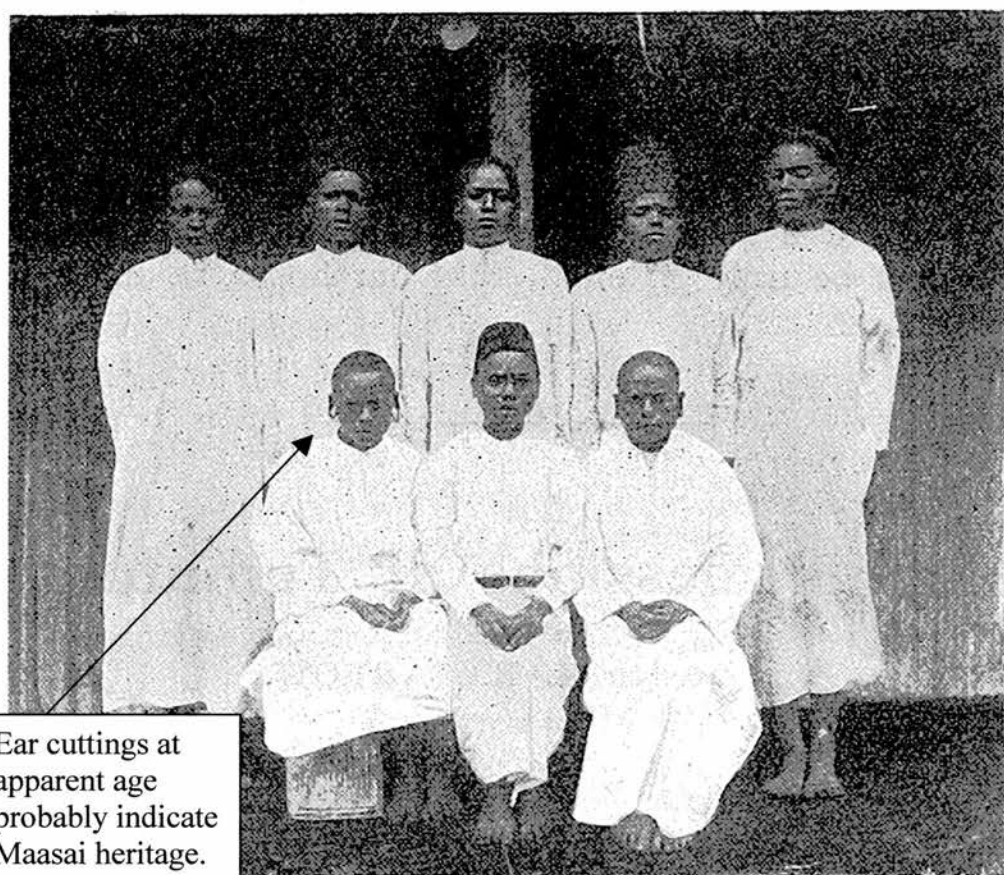
<sup>36</sup>"Catechumens at Kikuyu," *Kikuyu News* 36 (June 1912), 5 and "Young Male Catechumens," *Kikuyu News* 38 (October 1912), 10.



his apparent age gives strong indication that he is of Maasai lineage.



Fig. 36. Catechumens at Kikuyu (1912).



Ear cuttings at  
apparent age  
probably indicate  
Maasai heritage.

Fig. 37. Young Male Catechumens at Kikuyu (1912).

Even with such rigorous demands on the indigenous people, the church at Kikuyu was growing as evidenced by the 20-year statistical growth record.<sup>37</sup>

Table 1. Christian Growth at Kikuyu, 1908-1928

<i>Ecclesiastical Designation</i>	<i>1908</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1928</i>
Baptized Christians	7	249	2720
Baptisms	6	67	673
Catechumens	4	312	3349

Arthur reported in 1928 that “in August there was a congregation of 3,125, and on Christmas Sunday of no less than 3,614....”<sup>38</sup> Following directly on the heels of this rapid growth was an equally abrupt decline precipitated by the major dispute over female circumcision.<sup>39</sup> After some years of struggle, however, membership began to rebound. The first Church of the station could hold only 250, so for some time the congregation was meeting in a specially prepared open-air Church in the woods near the mission. These open-air situations can certainly be cited as influential on the Maasai as in this marginal area many would come simply out of curiosity to see this weekly event. In addition, it should be noted that the construction of the enormous new church was well underway with Maasai stonecutters continuing to work. Maasai presence throughout the history of the Kikuyu Mission Station can be pointed to as a means of creating a perception of Presbyterian worship among the Maasai nearby.

When the new Church of the Torch in Darkness at Kikuyu was dedicated on

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<sup>37</sup>John Arthur, “Report of 1928 as Presented to the General Assembly on 23rd May 1929,” *Kikuyu News* 108 (June 1929), 13.

<sup>38</sup>Arthur, “Report of 1928,” 13.

<sup>39</sup>For an African assessment of this issue see: Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya: The Traditional Life of the Gikuyu* (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1978).

9 September 1933, marking 35 years of work there, the mission's minister, Dr. Arthur, prepared the worship service utilizing the forms and traditions from his home church in Scotland. He writes, "An Order of Service had to be prepared. We followed that in the latest Church of Scotland Service Book, modified to suit African conditions."<sup>40</sup> The new church was built to hold 2,000. It was full to capacity with thousands more gathered around outside for the dedication service.

The service began with the singing of the 67th Psalm. It helped to quieten the congregation, but the noise from outside was so great that it was found difficult to make oneself heard within. Unfortunately, it was never possible to get even comparative quiet, but a good many were able to hear and all were able to see what was going on. The Rev. Mr. Calderwood, the Moderator, conducted the whole service admirably and with great dignity. A fluent speaker in Kikuyu, he was able to carry the long service through with satisfaction to the large African audience. After he had dedicated the Church as a whole to the Glory and Service of God, the Europeans sang that great 24th Psalm, verses 7-10, to the tune St. George's, Edinburgh. It sounded well, with good volume.<sup>41</sup>

In the following two photographs (Figs. 38 and 39) taken at the dedication of the Church of the Torch in Darkness, it is clearly evident that there is a group of Maasai in the foreground of each, giving evidence of the continuing influence Kikuyu Mission Station had in forming Maasai understanding of Presbyterian worship.<sup>42</sup> A current photograph of the church (Fig. 40) illustrates the continued influence of this massive church on the perception of Christian worship among the people in the area and on all who come to the adjacent Kikuyu Hospital.

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<sup>40</sup>John Arthur, "The Dedication of the Church of the Torch," *Kikuyu News* 126 (December 1933), 9.

<sup>41</sup>Arthur, *Church of the Torch*, 11.

<sup>42</sup>Church of the Torch in Darkness from *Kikuyu News* 126 (December 1933), 5. Current view: Strang, *Photographic Archive*, 2001, ChurchofTorch2002.jpeg.

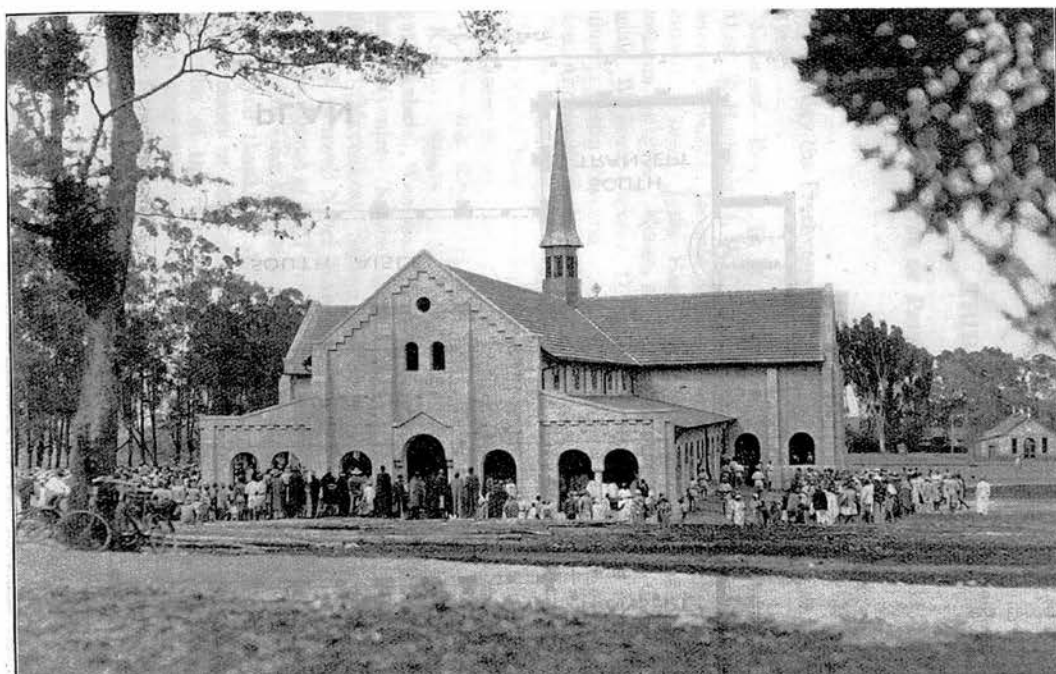


Fig. 38. Church of the Torch, South (1933).

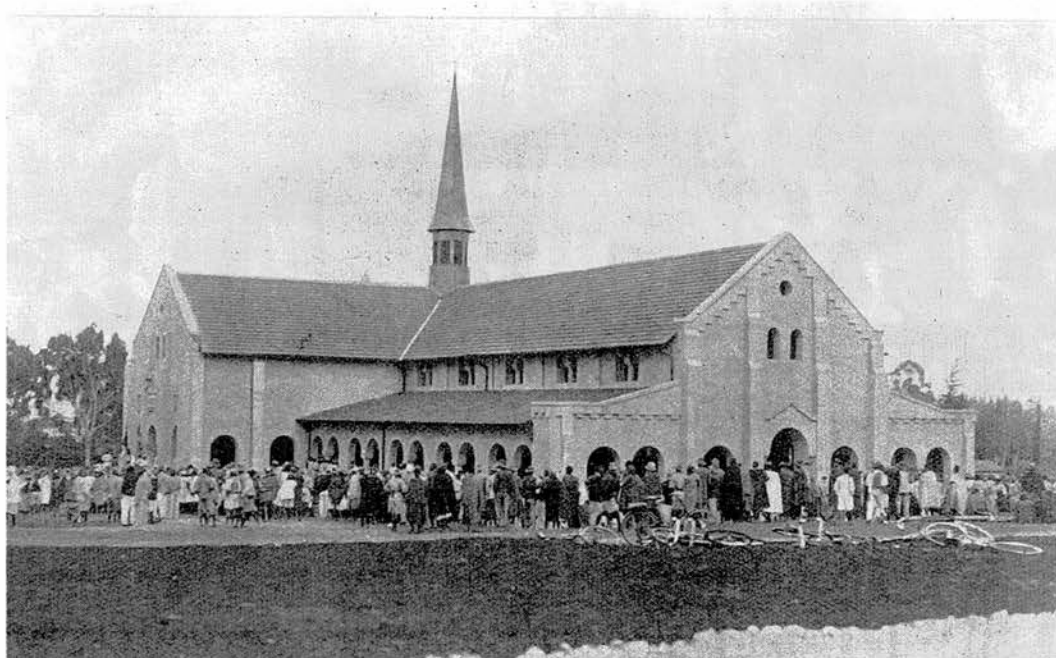


Fig. 39. Church of the Torch, North (1933).





Fig. 40. Church of the Torch, Original South Entrance (2002).

It is very interesting to note the inscribed wording on a memorial plaque placed within the church sometime after Dr. Arthur's death which states,

To the glory of God  
And in happy memory of His servant  
The Reverend  
John William Arthur  
"Rigitari"  
Missionary to the Kikuyu people 1906-1937  
A faithful and beloved doctor and friend  
Evangelist and administrator  
This Church of the Torch in Darkness  
Is his abiding memorial  
Called to higher service 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1952<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Memorial plaque in the Church of the Torch in Darkness, Kikuyu, Kenya. In a 2001 visit to the site, it was discovered that the secretary and church administrator of the Church of the Torch did not know the exact origin of this plaque, only that it was a gift. One can readily speculate that the wording and the placement of the plaque might very well have been the work of western mission personnel.

One cannot make too much of this because of possible local misinterpretations of the English words memory and memorial. Nevertheless, the plaque may have been erected to remember the service of a devoted missionary or it could be a monument to Dr. Arthur and other western Presbyterian missionaries and their ideas. In all likelihood, there is an amalgamation of the two. Furthermore, the very name given to the new church, "Church of the Torch in Darkness," has a mixed connotation. On the one hand, the Gospel of Jesus Christ may be said to bring the *torch light* of God's love to those of any race and any nation who are lost in the *darkness* of their sin. On the other hand, the church name may belie the prevalent view of many 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century missions that there was little, if anything, in African culture worthy of preserving in the churches being established. The *light* of western Christendom had come to penetrate the *darkness* of Africa culture and tradition.

As the dedication of the Church of the Torch in Darkness signaled a high mark of protestant missionary endeavors of the time, the Kikuyu Mission continued to exert its strong, albeit indirect, influence on the Maasai. The Mission and Scottish missionaries became more interested in direct influence upon the Maasai as the years passed. In 1945 and 1946, the *Kikuyu News* ran a series of articles describing the Maasai as the next focus of mission. Rev. R.A. Philp presented the common view of the difficulty represented in evangelizing the Maasai. "Even the few boys who get some schooling, the vast majority lapse back into their primitive war paint, and soon discard both European clothes and western patterns of behaviour...."<sup>44</sup> In his follow-up writing on the Maasai, Philp discusses how the Church of Scotland has

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<sup>44</sup>R.A. Philp, "The Evangelization of the Masai—Part 1," *Kikuyu News* 174 (December 1945), 704. Although grammatically difficult, this is the exact quotation.



always had some connection with the tribe. He states that there was even a martyr for the cause of Maasai evangelization at Kibwezi with the death of Dr. Charters and his companion. At first report it was not known what happened to Dr. Charters, but by the June 1928 issue of *Kikuyu News* it had become accepted, but never proven, that he and his friend had been killed by Maasai. The following photograph from 1945 (Fig. 41) illustrates the continued presence of Maasai at the Kikuyu Mission, thus showing that Maasai people had many years of opportunity to observe forms of worship and patterns of worship leadership.<sup>45</sup>



Fig. 41. Maasai Warriors at Kikuyu (1945).

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<sup>45</sup>*Kikuyu News* 174 (December 1945), 701.

It is fair to say that the missionaries at Kikuyu always had some interest in the Maasai people. In recounting evangelistic efforts among the Maasai, Philp writes,

When the Mission was transferred to Kikuyu in 1898, and work begun among the tribe of that name instead, it was found that the area of operations was on the verge of where the territory of the Kikuyu tribe marched with that of the Masai, and, as a result, throughout the years the Mission has always had a certain amount of contact at times with the Masai.<sup>46</sup>

In 1944, the Presbytery appointed a Maasai evangelist, Geoffrey Kanyangua, to begin evangelism work in earnest around the Kikuyu station and in the interior areas for Maasailand. A subsequent safari by the Rev. Philp, Kanyangua, and two African Anglican Church Council evangelists set out to map out areas in which the two denominations could work without overlapping and infringing each other's rights. Encounters with the Maasai on this safari are recounted by Philp with patronizing sympathy. In one case, the group met with some Maasai women while they were repairing their car. Some time after the women departed, the men noticed that they were being irritated by flies. Philp recounts the scene:

It was only a moment or two before one of us realised why we were suffering such irritation. 'That woman covered with those flies has left them behind.' 'That's right,' said one of the two Masai evangelists with us, 'that woman is just a fly-cupboard !'—a remark which I thought was very significant, for he made no attempt to stick up for the woman, however unhygienic her habits, on the ground that she was a member of his own tribe. In this particular matter his loyalties were with the world of the European missionary rather than with his fellow-tribeswoman. And certainly, as one contrasted his clean khaki shirt and shorts with the dirty fly-ridden state of the two women, one realised afresh the need of Masailand for the Gospel...<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>R.A. Philp, "The Evangelization of the Masai—Part II," *Kikuyu News* 175 (March 1946), 714.

<sup>47</sup>Philp, *Masai Evangelization II*, 719.

As late as the mid-1940's, the Presbyterians' developing ministry goal for the Maasai appears not only to be their being introduced to Jesus Christ as their Lord, but equally their being taught western hygiene, dress and customs.

In 1949, Rev. Philp and Dr. Arthur met with Christian Maasai leaders at a Church of Scotland supported school near Ngong. They were impressed with the neat and tidy work of the children, the choir's ability to sing western hymns in harmony, and the cleanliness of the children and their uniforms. There they heard several requests, one of which was that the people desperately wanted help in securing an ordained Maasai minister to help them evangelize their own people. The missionaries focused their efforts on the request for more schools, but, at this point, there was little done in the area of indigenous leadership training and provision of Maasai ministers.<sup>48</sup>

A photographic archive at the National Library of Scotland depicts the history of the Kikuyu Mission Station and contains a significant number of Maasai photographs indicating the proximity and pervasiveness of the Maasai around this Mission. Of particular interest to this study are: a photograph of the opening of the Scott Sanatorium on 7 June 1913 where, to the side of those gathered for the ceremony, there can be seen a band of Maasai warriors; photographs of worship scenes, mostly outside the church, where groups of Maasai can be clearly seen; a photograph of a worship service in progress taken at an open air gathering where Maasai can be seen seated before the western clothed African evangelist preaching from a lectern; a photograph of the wood working shop at Kikuyu in which a Maasai warrior (*olmurrani*) can be seen in the corner; a photograph of a Maasai warrior

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<sup>48</sup>John Arthur, "The Masai," *Kikuyu News* 187 (March 1949), 957.

with Mr. Barlow, the Station's language specialist with pen-in-hand, the warrior's spear and shield propped at the entrance to Barlow's porch.<sup>49</sup>

In a series of photographs dated Sunday, 15 August 1926, one can clearly see Maasai groups participating in the outdoor worship service. Rev. Dr. Arthur, Rev. W.B. Stevenson, and Mr. Barlow are shown officiating the service attended by a large crowd of at least 800 people. The ministers were shown dressed in pulpit gowns, academic hoods, preaching bands, and pith helmets. Even outside, without the formality of a church building, there is to be noticed a table with a lace cloth cover, an ornate metal book stand, metal collection plates, and a large flower splay in front. On the right side of a photograph of the ministers and communicants at this service, the back of a man is pictured who is clearly a Maasai. All the photographs of African clergy are either in robe and preaching bands or in clerical collar and suit.<sup>50</sup>

In this study of the Kikuyu Mission Station, it has not been my purpose to criticize nor condemn the missionaries who gave their lives in Christian service. What I have been trying to show is that Maasai people were directly and significantly influenced in their perception of Christian worship practice and worship leadership by the activities which went on under the auspices of the Kikuyu Mission. At this point, it is clear that many Maasai were exposed to and influenced

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<sup>49</sup>The National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh has in its collection a series of lantern slides, photograph albums, and boxed photographs which pictorially trace the history of various aspects of Church of Scotland missionary work in Kenya. In the photographic accounts surrounding Kikuyu Mission, many clearly identifiable Maasai are depicted in and around the station. Acc. 7548, F. 21 (1911), F. 22 (1926), F. 23 (1926), F. 24 (1926).

<sup>50</sup>A photograph album assembled by the Rev. W.B. Stevenson depicting life and work at the Kikuyu Mission Station in 1926, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, F. 22.

by formal, European-style services of Christian worship held at Kikuyu and witnessed a strict and prescribed style of worship leadership. This is evidenced by the fact that the Kikuyu Station was on a Maasai border area where regular interchange with Kikuyu occurred, that Maasai *ilmurrani* (warriors) were employed in stonecutting work at the Mission, that the written records of missionaries attest to it, and that there are ample photographic records of Maasai at the Kikuyu Mission Station at various times throughout its history, especially at times of worship.

### *The Presbyterian Church of East Africa*

#### *Historic Worship Influences of the PCEA on Maasai People*

The Scottish Mission at Kikuyu was not unique in exerting its influence and shaping the idea of what Christian worship was to be for Christians under its charge. As Nketia has written, “Christian worship, as it has reached Africa, has been cast in the mould which was originally designed and shaped in those countries whence the missionaries came to evangelise Africa.”<sup>51</sup> It seemed to be a common practice in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century missions to use familiar, western forms of worship instead of enabling indigenous expression. Adrian Hastings writes, “There can be no question but that Europeans in general and European missionaries in particular, with some few exceptions, admitted little if any culture of value in Africa.”<sup>52</sup> Lamin Sanneh comments on this period of missionary activity and influence, “Images abound of children in Africa or Papua New Guinea, or anywhere else, playing cricket, working diligently at their table manners or comporting themselves to the

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<sup>51</sup>J.H. Nketia quoted by J.S. Pobee, “The Skenosis of Christian Worship in Africa,” *Studia Liturgica* 14, no. 1 (1980), 41.

<sup>52</sup>Adrian Hastings, *African Christianity* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976), 37.

measured jig of Scottish country dance, all their consecrated hours witnessed by a bucolic missionary chapel on the hill and a long way from the village. How many African choirs have not laboured gallantly at the strains of Gounod or Handel while the harmonic rhythms of a different music throb in their veins?"<sup>53</sup>

From the onset of the mission of the Church of Scotland, African tradition was condemned and targeted for change with the view of removing its presence in Presbyterian worship services. There were only a few advocates of retaining African culture in mission churches among Presbyterian missionaries. One of these advocates was the mission's first director, Dr. D.C. Scott. Scott showed his support of African culture in a letter to Dr. Robertson, a Church of Scotland minister at Wittingehame, Prestonkirk: "Ordinary conceptions at home relative to heathen ideas of God, of the moral law, of worship are totally astray."<sup>54</sup> D.C. Scott saw value in Africans and in their cultural uniqueness. Scott pushed forward the indigenously sensitive church (Fig. 42) during his missionary assignment in Blantyre, Malawi before taking on the project at Kikuyu.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Lamin Sanneh, *Encountering the West* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1993), 98.

<sup>54</sup>Letter from Dr. D.C. Scott to Dr. Robertson, 25 July 1903, manuscript, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, D. 66. To further confirm Scott's advocacy, see: Andrew Ross, *Blantyre Mission and the Making of Modern Malawi* (Blantyre, Malawi: CLAIM, 1996), 154 and 127-128 (a poem by Scott which shows admiration for Africans and African culture).

<sup>55</sup>"In Memorium of D.C. Ruffelle Scott" in *Kikuyu Mission, East Africa: 1891-1908* (Edinburgh: R& R Clark, 1908), 44.



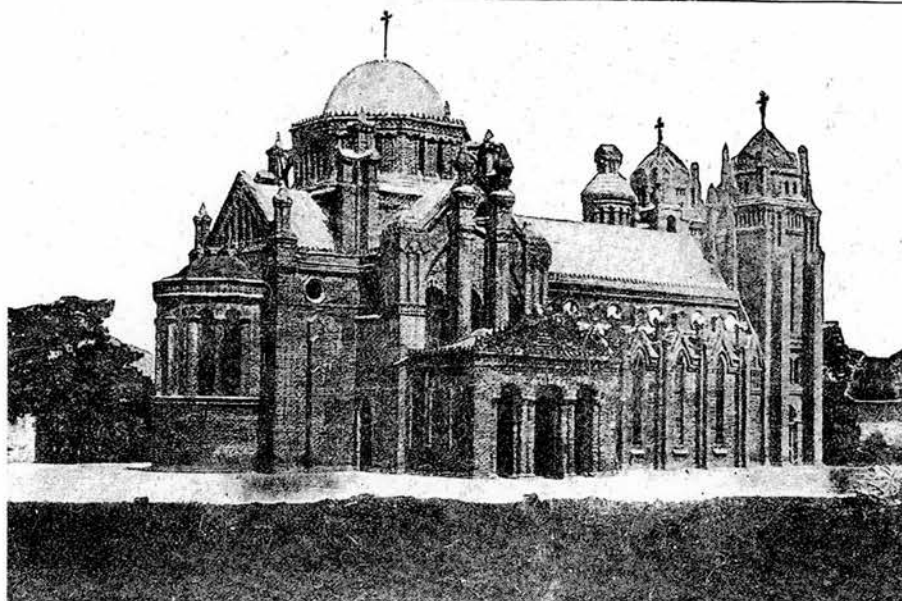


Fig. 42. Church at Blantyre, Malawi (Built by D.C. Scott).

Even with the strength of D.C. Scott's early advocacy, the majority view prevailed and guided subsequent mission leaders.<sup>56</sup> Scott had a very difficult time in his service in Malawi because of his pro-African views which ultimately led to his assignment to Kikuyu. Even though his missiological view may have been the same, it may be argued that his passion and energy for idigenization was markedly less during his time in Kenya. Nevertheless, the indigenous African peoples in and around Kikuyu liked D.C. Scott and linguist, Arthur Barlow very much. The graves of both Scott and Barlow are in the burial plot of the Church of the Torch in Darkness, Kikuyu (Figs. 43 and 44). It is because of the sincere value these men had for Africans that their graves are kept in proper order by Kenyans to this day—a simple, yet significant sign of a positive and enduring impact.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>For a more thorough treatment of D.C. Scott and his missiological thought see: Ross, *Blantyre Mission*.

<sup>57</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, DCSScottGrave02.jpeg, ABarlowGrave02.jpeg.



Fig. 43. Grave of D.C. Scott, Kikuyu (2002).

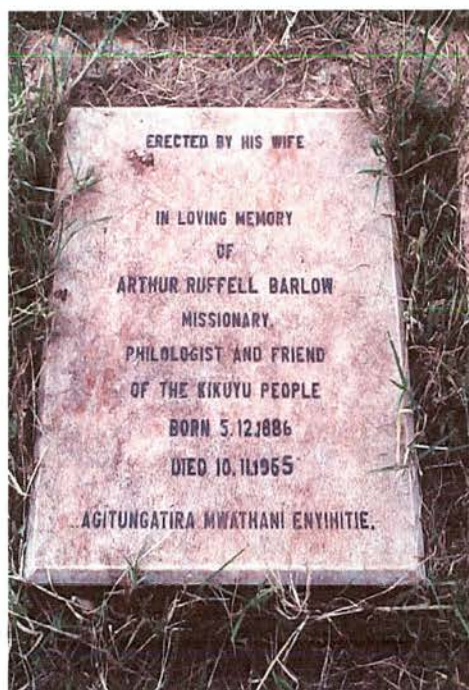


Fig. 44. Grave of A. Barlow, Kikuyu (2002).

It would be unfair and inaccurate to make a blanket generalization that all missionaries failed to appreciate African cultural uniqueness and beauty. The previously mentioned D.C. Scott was a strong advocate of African culture and indigenization during his service in Malawi. Donald Fraser was a champion of the local African people during his missionary labors in Nyasaland earning the respect of Africans and Scots at home. “When he (Fraser) left the country almost thirty years afterwards, the people cited his having eaten their native food as one of the proofs of how thoroughly he had identified himself with them....The people knew that he had given himself to them: they had his heart.”<sup>58</sup> The point of this section is to consider the work of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) among

<sup>58</sup> Agnes Fraser, *Donald Fraser of Livingstonia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934), 51 and 268.

Maasai people and its liturgy and see that, in many ways, it practices and promotes forms of Christian worship that are foreign to the culture of many of its members, especially the Maasai.

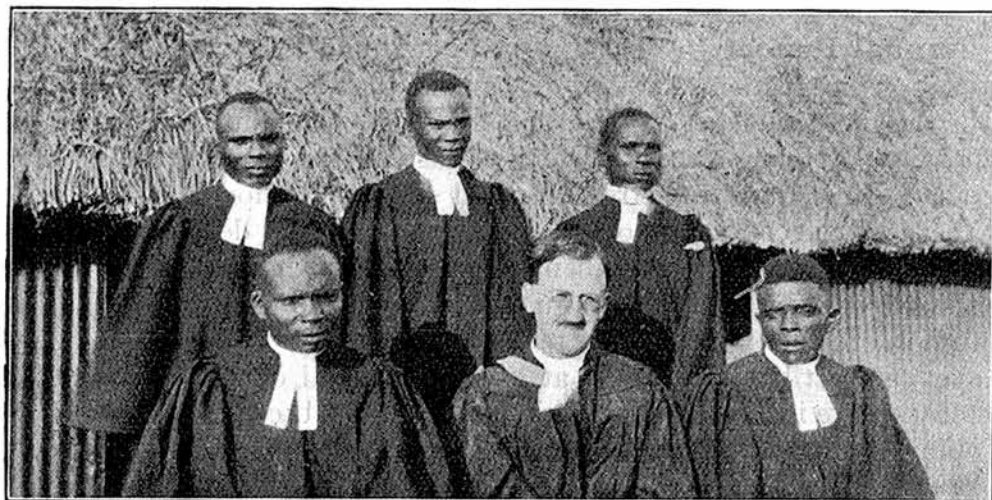
Rev. Calderwood, one of the key leaders in both the Kikuyu Mission and in the entire work of the Church of Scotland in Kenya, set the tone for establishing worship practices with his attitude which is reflected in his writing, "Old African culture provides far less material to be incorporated in the government, worship, and doctrine of the Church than do the cultures of India and China, and therefore the Churches in Africa will tend to be more imitative of European models."<sup>59</sup> Lamin Sanneh's conclusion is that this is in fact what occurred: "Church organizations introduced new rules and patterns of administration, bureaucracy, formal procedures, communications, correspondence and record-keeping."<sup>60</sup> Just how pervasive this western imitation actually was no doubt varied, but in the matter of clerical dress this was a desire to establish the parity of Scottish and African clergy. For the PCEA, this insistence on uniformity is clear in following photographs from 1926 which show what PCEA African clergy were required to wear: robes and preaching bands.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Calderwood, *Kenya Colony*, 45-46.

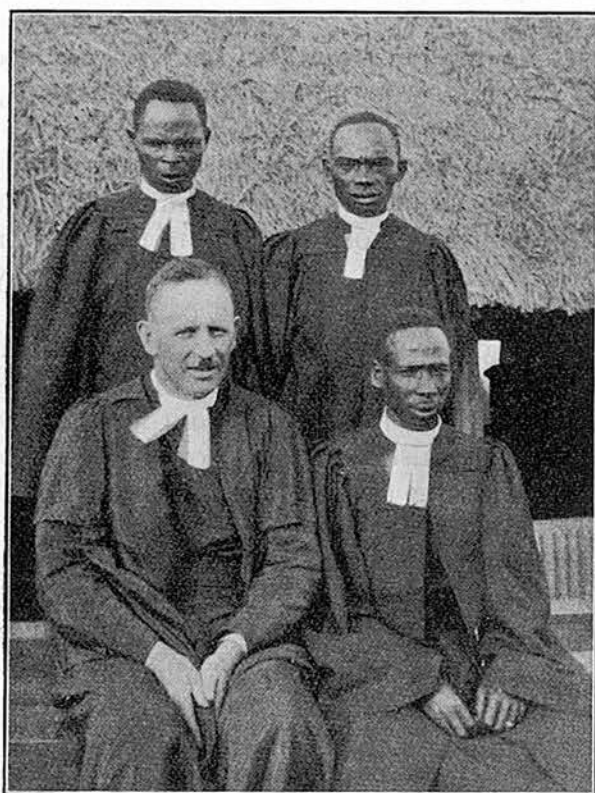
<sup>60</sup>Sanneh, *Encountering the West*, 98.

<sup>61</sup>First Ordained African Presbyterian Ministers, *Kikuyu News* 96 (June 1926), 25.



*Rev. Mr Calderwood and the five Tumutumu native Ministers.*  
*Left to right (Back row)—Rev. Jeremia Waita (Chogoria), Rev. Joshua Riunga, Rev. Simeon Karecu.*  
*(Front row)—Rev. Solomon Ndambi and Rev. Paulo Kahuho.*

Fig. 45. First Ordained PCEA African Clergy, Tumutumu (1926).



*Rev. Dr Arthur and the three Kikuyu native Ministers, Rev. Musa Gitau, Rev. Benjamin Githieya, and Rev. Joshua Matenjwa.*

Fig. 46. First Ordained PCEA African Clergy, Kikuyu (1926).



Even the meetings of the indigenous African Presbytery witnessed a formality in dress and demeanor that is evident in the group photograph of the occasion. Drs. Arthur and Calderwood along with three other western missionaries join the African clergy for this historic photograph (Fig. 47).<sup>62</sup> Each African pastor wears the clerical collar and a similar western styled suit and shoes. These early photographs of the first African Presbyterian ministers in Kenya can be compared to the dress and facial expressions of the officials at the PCEA General Assembly of 1956, thirty years after the ordination of the first indigenous clergy (Fig. 48). In each instance, the men wear robes and preaching bands along with expressions of absolute seriousness.<sup>63</sup> The Presbyterian emphasis on everything needing to be decent and in order is certainly obvious. Nevertheless, African Christians were not powerless pawns of western cultural imposition, although influence on both dress and demeanor seemed to go along with the propagation of the Gospel. There will be more said about dress conventions.

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<sup>62</sup>The Synod of the East African Presbyterian Church, October 1948. Photograph located in the lower level office of the Church of the Torch in Darkness, Kikuyu, Kenya.

<sup>63</sup>Presbyterian Officials, in "The First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa," a commemorative brochure of the inauguration of the united, autonomous PCEA which was held at St. Andrew's Church, Nairobi on 11 February 1956, 32.



Fig. 47. East African Presbyterian Church (1948).



Fig. 48. PCEA Officials (1956).



Fabric specialist and researcher, Jerry Bleem, conducted a study of clerical dress over the centuries. While early Christian church leaders wore simply the clothing worn by Roman society, by the Middle Ages an ornate and ostentatious tradition of clergy dress had become the standard. He concludes that this underscored the distance that had grown between the congregation and the minister.<sup>64</sup> The importation of clerical dress codes into the African Presbyterian context tended to separate the clergy from the laity and formalize the proceedings of worship itself. While it may be true that the special dress and equipment of the Maasai *oloiboni* and other people's traditional spiritual leaders serve partly to separate them from the people, in the context of Christian faith, leaders are to be servants and shepherds of their flock in the model of the suffering servant, Jesus Christ. Ordination in the Presbyterian church is an act of setting one apart for service. In the best light, Presbyterian clerical dress is unostentatiously simple and supports the servant model well. On the other hand, when used as a uniform of power and control, it can create a sense of acrimony rather than honor and respect.

#### *PCEA Liturgical Influences*

The liturgy of the Church of Scotland was given to Kenyan Presbyterians dating from the initial services of worship held at Kikuyu Mission noted earlier. The *Church Service Book* of the PCEA is largely a direct translation of the *Ordinal and Service Book* of the Church of Scotland. The PCEA service book is the standard by which African PCEA clergy and lay worship leaders conduct services in particular churches today. While the many valuable ideas can be viewed as a helpful guide for

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<sup>64</sup>Jerry Bleem, "Body and Soul: How Changes in Clerical Dress Reveal the History and Changing Attitudes of the Church," *Fiberarts* 20 (March/April 1994), 51-55.

conducting the various services of the church, it can also be seen as a direct importation of a liturgy that has been culturally conditioned by those outside the African community. Provided here is a brief example.

In the "Standard Order for Communion Service," the prayers are written almost verbatim from the Church of Scotland resource. It is helpful to note a side-by-side comparison of excerpts from the service prayers.<sup>65</sup>

#### PCEA

Almighty God, unto who all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>66</sup>

#### PCEA

O God, who has prepared for those who love you such good things as pass man's understanding; pour into our hearts such love towards you that we may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to who with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.<sup>68</sup>

#### Church of Scotland

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>67</sup>

#### Church of Scotland

O God, who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding; pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Spirit all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>"Standard Order for Communion Service," *Church Service Book* (Nairobi: Jitegemea Publishers, 1975), 24-33, and "Form and Order for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion," *Ordinal and Service Book* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 1-12.

<sup>66</sup>*Church Service Book*, 25.

<sup>67</sup>*Ordinal and Service Book*, 1.

<sup>68</sup>*Church Service Book*, 26.

PCEA

Remember O Lord, in mercy, the sick,  
the aged and the dying, all who are in  
trouble of any kind, especially those  
known to us whom we name in our  
we name in our hearts before you.  
Visit them with your love and  
consolation and grant  
them your peace.  
Amen.<sup>70</sup>

Church of Scotland

Remember, O Lord, the sick and the  
suffering, the aged and the dying, and  
all who are in loneliness, sorrow, or  
bereavement; and those whom  
we name in silence before Thee.  
Visit them with Thy love and  
consolation, and grant  
them Thy peace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>71</sup>

As can readily be seen, the liturgy is nearly identical. While not suggesting abandoning liturgy in PCEA Maasai churches, a more thoughtful production of services such as those done by Vincent Donovan would be commended:

The green pastures of God are like a wedding feast or a circumcision feast, where there will be dancing and singing, and sugar cane for the children to suck on, and beads for the women, and tobacco for the elders to chew on, and milk and meat for everyone. And honey beer. And many will come from beyond the white mountain of Kilimanjaro on the one side, and from beyond the Serengeti plains on the other, to rejoice at that feast.<sup>72</sup>

This portion of a prayer written by Donovan for use in Maasai worship more accurately reflects the life and concerns of Maasai people than blanket copies of western liturgies.

In addition, the suggestions written in the PCEA service book for the minister are another example of this, perhaps unintentional, transfer of culture. Again, referring to the PCEA "Standard Order for Communion Service," the hymn suggestions list exclusively western choices. For example, the suggestions to use

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<sup>69</sup>*Ordinal and Service Book*, 2.

<sup>70</sup>*Church Service Book*, 28.

<sup>71</sup>*Ordinal and Service Book*, 4.

<sup>72</sup>Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered*, 79.

“Praise Waits for Thee in Zion, Lord,” “Love Divine,” and “Father, We Thank Thee,” make the musical standard for the liturgy clearly western. There are no notations in the PCEA service protocol suggesting use of an African choir or indigenous music.

In 1949, Rev. Philp and Dr. Arthur of the Kikuyu Mission Station visited a Church of Scotland sponsored school near Ngong. At this meeting, the Maasai sang European hymns for the missionaries. Dr. Arthur remarked,

The meeting was opened with prayer, reverent, as always. Then the choir sang to us, trebles and basses, ‘How Sweet the Name,’ ‘By and By We’ll See the King,’ and ‘Crown Him Lord of All.’ The singing was good, led by evangelist Geoffrey Kanyangua. I think the Masai voices are sweeter than those of the Kikuyu.<sup>73</sup>

From the beginnings of an organized work among the Maasai in 1944 with the appointment of the first PCEA Maasai evangelist, Geoffrey Kanyangua, the new Maasai Christians were taught that reverently presented western music and instrumentation was the kind of music that was acceptable in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa.

Finally, an example given to African Presbyterians of the Christian rite for a wedding can be cited as an example of imposing western cultural views on new Christians in the Presbyterian Churches in Kenya. The following photograph, (Fig. 49) made early in the history of the Kikuyu mission, is evidence of this influence. Note the western dress of the participants, the white dress of the bride, and the intense gravity of expression on the faces of all the wedding party. A comment in the text by the photograph states: “The expression of extreme

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<sup>73</sup>J. Arthur, “The Masai,” *Kikuyu News* 187 (March 1949), 956.

seriousness on the faces is due partly to the solemnity of the marriage service.”<sup>74</sup>

The very fact that a photograph was being made perhaps influenced the visage of the wedding party.



Fig. 49. Wedding at Kikuyu (1948).

During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, just when these patterns of missionary activity were prominent, Roland Allen wrote, “There is a very grave danger in importing complete systems of worship and theology. We lay great stress on the constant repetition of formal services; we make it our boast that our Prayer Book, year by year in orderly cycle, brings before us the whole system of the faith, and we import that Prayer Book and hand it over to new congregations.”<sup>75</sup> Today, there is common agreement that all cultures and peoples have unique contributions

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<sup>74</sup>Kikuyu Wedding, *Kenya: 1898-1948, The Jubilee Book of the Church of Scotland Mission, Kenya Colony* (Glasgow: Church of Scotland, Foreign Mission Committee, 1948), 40.

<sup>75</sup>Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (London: Robert Scott, 1912), 122.



to make to various spheres of life, including Christian worship. During the formation of the Presbyterian Church in Kenya, however, traditional expressions were devalued and western ones put in their place. As has been demonstrated, Maasai people were present at the Kikuyu Mission Station and therefore witnessed and experienced the formality of the Scottish liturgy, clerical dress, and Christian rites. These factors continued to be of influence as the PCEA pioneered work in the same model among the Maasai people.

### *Current PCEA Worship Influences on Maasai People*

During the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there has been a great emphasis on Christian outreach to the Maasai with various para-church groups as well as mainline denominations becoming active in their areas. I will briefly consider the current work of the PCEA. The PCEA took a large role in assisting the Maasai by their sponsoring the Maasai Rural Development Centre (MRDC).

The MRDC property is located on the edge of Maasai territory some 30 miles from Nairobi on the eastern side of the *Ngong Hills* in a community called *Olooseos*. The PCEA established the Centre in 1968 and it continues to operate today, although under different governance. In past years, the Centre has operated a demonstration farm with an agronomist to teach food raising methods to the Maasai, an often strange idea to pastoralists, but a vital one as Maasai are being settled into permanent areas. MRDC maintains a clinic with a nurse and medical dispensary, and an animal husbandry program with a veterinary store. Both a primary and a secondary school are on its campus as well as a church that serves as the *Olooseos* parish headquarters. The MRDC experienced periods of conflict and various levels of activity over the years, but it was always a major symbol and center of PCEA

ministry to the Maasai.<sup>76</sup>

The first director of the PCEA's Centre at *Olooseos*, Colin Crabbie, was determined that the Maasai needed to change practically every aspect of their lives in order to find a place in the growing, independent nation of Kenya. A report of the Overseas Council of the Church of Scotland concurs with this vision for radical change held by Crabbie, "The present Director of the project among the Masai is convinced that unless they can be helped to change their total way of life quickly they have no future in modern Kenya. The Church effort is therefore four-pronged, children's education, health education, modern methods of agriculture, both crop and animal husbandry, and evangelism. This work based at Olooseos is trying to help people scattered over 1,000 square miles."<sup>77</sup> The following image (Fig. 50) is a photograph of MRDC's first director, who essentially set this four-pronged course for the project which remained basically intact for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>*PCEA Kenya Minutes, 1-1-65 to 31-12-68*, Minute 54/67, *General Administrative Committee Report 15-17, June 1965* and *PCEA Income and Expense Account, Years 1964 to 1968*, manuscript, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 9638, B. 59. For further information on the MRDC see the annual Church of Scotland Overseas Council Reports listed in the bibliography.

<sup>77</sup>"Salvation Today: 1972 Report of the Overseas Council as Submitted to the General Assembly, 1973" (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons Ltd., 1973), 7.

<sup>78</sup>"One Aim" (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland Overseas Council and Bishop & Sons Ltd., 1972), 46. See also: "Who is my Neighbor: 1966 Report of the Overseas Council as Submitted to the General Assembly, 1967" (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland, 1967), 6 and "Outward Reach in Misison: 1970 Report of the Overseas Council as Submitted to the General Assembly, 1971" (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland, 1971), 7-8.

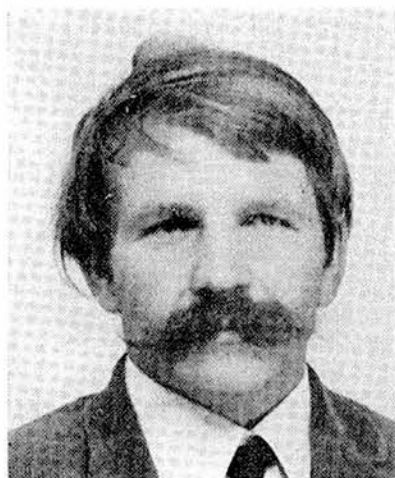


Fig. 50. Colin Crabbie, First Director, MRDC (1972).

As part of the evangelistic thrust of the *Olooseos* project, there was a need for a church center for this mission area. The Church of the Good Shepherd was built in the mid-1970's on the MRDC compound and served as the focal point of the parish. Built with money and architectural instruction from Pennsylvania Presbyterian Robin Wolf, the church building is an octagon of hewn stone with tall leaded glass windows. There are several stained glass windows behind and to the sides of the pulpit area. It is an imposing and foreign structure for folks who are accustomed to living in small, dung and mud houses. The next photograph (Fig. 51) illustrates well the silent but continued formal influence of the PCEA on the Maasai through the architecture of the Church of the Good Shepherd.<sup>79</sup> There are no written descriptions of the actual worship practices at this church or others in PCEA Maasai churches, but, on the basis of years of missionary service with the Presbyterian Church among the Maasai and personal worship experiences in this particular church and many others, the writer can attest that the services are very formal and rely almost exclusively on the liturgy provided by the PCEA. In the next

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<sup>79</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, *OlooseosAndEvangelists.jpeg*.

chapters, fieldwork data from observers to this church and others give a current picture of worship practice.



Fig. 51. PCEA Church of the Good Shepherd, *Olooseos* (1989).

The Maasai Rural Development Centre had a tumultuous relationship with an American-funded and led para-church organization, the Maasai Action for Self Improvement (MASI). MASI, based on the western side of the *Ngong Hills* at *Olosho-oibor*, did many of the same projects as MRDC, but the groups were mostly at odds with one another. The work of MASI essentially terminated a decade ago and the MRDC, long left idle, began anew under direction and control of the African Institute for Scientific Research and Development (AISRED) in 1996. The PCEA and AISRED forged a ten-year joint partnership which “assigns the overall responsibility for the project management to AISRED.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>“Maasai Rural Development Centre, Olooseos, Kenya, Development of an Experimental and Demonstration Farm: Project Proposal” (Nairobi: AISRED, November 1986), vi.

Since assuming control of *Olooseos*, AISRED has experienced difficulties in managing the development project. In the AISRED project proposal, there is little mention of the incredible change resulting from economic and cultural shifts in the *Olooseos* area. Nor is there mention of specific plans to involve Maasai people in the main vision for the project and decisions of what will be done there. The only specific names given are the four on the decision-making AISRED Agricultural Team, all from outside of the community and none of which are Maasai.<sup>81</sup> The 1981 *Olooseos Feasibility Report*, stated, “the environment around *Olooseos* has changed radically with an extension of urban influence the area to the north west being now densely populated by sedentary groups on small holdings with very different cultural and socio/economic backgrounds and expectations.”<sup>82</sup> This study also cited one of the main reasons for the failure of the MRDC as “the low degree of real ‘imbedding’ of projects within the local population and their lack of representation in policy formulation and decision making.”<sup>83</sup> It appears that this new group with its western financial backing is making some of the same mistakes of the misdirected MRDC. Again, the 1981 document offered sage counsel, “We cannot help but conclude that one of the biggest needs of the Masai population group is for an understanding and acceptance of their cultural values and historical background by those who wish to assist in their self-development.”<sup>84</sup> The point of briefly tracing the work of MASI, MRDC, and AISRED in relation to current worship influences upon Maasai people

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<sup>81</sup> *AISRED Project Proposal*, 14.

<sup>82</sup> Alan Fowler and J.K. Ole Sein, “*Olooseos Feasibility Study*” (Nairobi: privately printed, March 1981), 8.

<sup>83</sup> Fowler and Ole Sein, “*Olooseos*,” 7.

<sup>84</sup> Fowler and Ole Sein, “*Olooseos*,” 38.



is simply to document the ongoing presence of western controlled missionary endeavor and show that these efforts continue to involve little indigenous Maasai leadership in, not only their development projects, but also in their works of evangelization.

The termination of the work of MASI and the transfer of MRDC to AISRED control leaves a gap in Presbyterian work among the Maasai. This tends to propagate suspicion in Maasai communities concerning the continued commitment of the PCEA to the Maasai. There have also been reports of dissatisfaction with some of the practices of the PCEA among the Maasai, specifically in areas of church finances, worship practices, and clergy assignments.<sup>85</sup> With most of the autonomous PCEA leadership historically coming from the Kikuyu tribe, Maasai people may now see the source of these impositions as Kikuyu rather than Scottish, European, or American. One can trace patterns that have given PCEA ecclesiastical advantage to Kikuyu people from the onset of the Kikuyu Mission Station. Consequently, this has influenced the manner in which Maasai people perceive Christian worship.

Aside from ecclesiastical concerns, it is prudent to mention briefly the long-standing tension that exists between the Maasai and the Kikuyu. This is certainly partially rooted in the divergent life view of herders and farmers. The contrary needs of these very different approaches to life produced animosity and even physical conflict. Innumerable Maasai raids on Kikuyu farms for the purpose of stealing animals, traditionally believed to be theirs as gifts from *Enkai*, many times resulted in carnage and exacerbated hostile feelings between the two groups. As was earlier shown, when European settlers and missionaries came to Kenya, the

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<sup>85</sup>Timothy Fairman, "Studies Relating to Maasai Evangelization" (Th.M. diss., Fuller School of World Mission, 1980), 101-137.

Kikuyu were open to their presence with them, while the Maasai tended to isolate themselves. Even in current popular writings, the disparity between Kikuyu and Maasai peoples is noted. "The Maasai have not fared well in modern Africa....Other tribes of Kenya, such as the Kikuyu for instance, have readily adapted to modern business, big cities, and formal systems of government. In contrast, the Maasai have persisted in their traditional ways, so as the country takes more land for national parks and intensified agriculture, they suffer."<sup>86</sup> The point of this brief divergence is simply to note that animosity between these two groups existed before missionaries ever took up their work. When the Scottish missionaries did arrive in highlands north of Nairobi, the Kikuyu seemed readily receptive while the Maasai were considered dangerous. With the entire country to evangelize, the Presbyterians initially forged the path of least resistance.

As noted earlier, while the geographic location of the Kikuyu Mission Station was on the outer edge of Maasai territory and could provide access into that region for evangelistic outreach, it was situated squarely in the heart of the Kikuyu highlands. As has been shown, there were ample opportunities for a sizable number of Maasai to work, worship, and observe at the Station, but the predominant group receiving ministry benefit was the Kikuyu. Naturally, scripture, liturgy, and hymns were all translated into Kikuyu, not Maasai. In 1923, there is a notation in the financial ledger of the Kikuyu Mission Station for a large expenditure to purchase hymnbooks in Kikuyu language.<sup>87</sup> The 1933 dedicatory service for the Church of

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<sup>86</sup>*The Maasai*, LUCASAFARI (1999), Internet: <http://www.maasai.com/maasai.htm>, Accessed 16 July 2003.

<sup>87</sup>*East African Scottish Mission, Kikuyu Ledger No. 2, 1923*, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, F. 22, 48.

the Torch in Darkness was conducted by Rev. Calderwood entirely in the Kikuyu language.<sup>88</sup> When remembering the missionaries who labored there, the Kikuyu are mentioned. The plaque in the Church of the Torch in Darkness erected to Dr. Arthur's memory memorializes him as "Missionary to the Kikuyu people."<sup>89</sup> The gravestone of Barlow, the linguist who was beginning a translation work in *ol Maa* (the language of the Maasai) refers to him as "friend of the Kikuyu people."<sup>90</sup> Educational classes, technical trade skill development, agricultural training, health care, theological education and leadership training were all part of the work of Scottish Presbyterians at Kikuyu and mainly benefited those in the immediate proximity of the Mission. It is not surprising then that many of the first ordained PCEA African clergy were Kikuyu.<sup>91</sup>

The pattern of developing Kikuyu church leadership, which naturally began in the 1926 ordination of PCEA Kikuyu clergy, continued as the work of the Mission Station expanded. In fact, to at least one missionary working in the field, it was clearly obvious that an exclusive pattern of both church membership and leadership development had entrenched itself along narrow tribal lines. In an unpublished memorandum from 1944, R.A. Philp, asks the supervising Scottish Mission Council to provide him daily Maasai language study time, permission to spend time among Maasai people, and funding for travel into Maasai areas. In addition, Philp pushes for a new policy of church and mission development that

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<sup>88</sup> Arthur, *Church of the Torch*, 9.

<sup>89</sup> See text of plaque on page 105 and corresponding footnote 43.

<sup>90</sup> See Fig. 44.

<sup>91</sup> *Kikuyu News* 96 (June 1926), 25.

would take into account the diversity of the people's residing in East Africa. He writes,

If the Church adds to its Masai membership, it will gain both in strength and in balance of perspective. At present it suffers from the fact that its members and leaders are so largely from one tribe, while as for the title 'Presbyterian Church of East Africa,' although this shows vision, it is at present anything but the truth. If, however, the Church by now increasing its activities among the Masai should, in days to come, develop as far as Tanganyika border or even beyond it (and perhaps through its Masai work make contacts with allied tribes such as Lumbwa and Samburu) the words 'East Africa' would then not be meaningless. And in the Councils of the Church these other tribal elements would through their different mental make-up counterbalance any weaknesses that may be involved in matters being looked at, as at present, through exclusively Kikuyu eyes.<sup>92</sup>

So then, it is without dispute that the initial balance within the PCEA skewed toward the Kikuyu. By 1944, there was such a disproportional number of PCEA Kikuyu members and leaders, that Philp drafted this strong memorandum. The effort of the MRDC at *Olooseos* was an attempt at ministry among the Maasai, but with little Maasai leadership, input, or community support, it eventually failed. Until recently, the PCEA Maasai churches in the study area of this thesis were under the jurisdiction of the predominately Kikuyu *Ngong Hills* Presbytery. With only one or two Maasai clergy representatives at meetings of the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery, there was little support for initiatives in Maasai ministry. With the recent division of PCEA Maasai churches into mission outreach areas, their jurisdiction falls to the denominational headquarters in Nairobi. Today, the current PCEA Moderator, the Secretary General, and the Principal of the official PCEA Pastoral Training Institute

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<sup>92</sup>R.A. Philp, "Memorandum Prepared for Presentation to Kenya Colony Mission Council which Outlines a Fresh Development in Policy by the African Church and Suggests a Parallel Development by the Mission (1944)," manuscript, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, Acc. 7548, B. 33, 2.

are Kikuyu.

These instances of apparent ecclesiastical favoritism could be an additional source of conflict between peoples that have been, at best, barely tolerant of each other. The PCEA Kikuyu leaders have accepted and incorporated many western conventions into church practice and have propagated Kikuyu versions of these practices into PCEA Maasai mission churches. The result has often been a Maasai perception of Christian worship that has been filtered through early 20<sup>th</sup> century Scottish missionary Presbyterianism, then through emerging Kikuyu Christianity. With the lack of ordained PCEA Maasai clergy, Maasai Christians may derive their view of worship through the often reluctant, indigenous Kikuyu and other PCEA clergy who drive into Maasai areas, conduct a formal, prayer book worship service, and return to their homes. In summary, historic and continued insistence on western formality in clergy dress, worship service conventions, liturgy, and church organization has led to the autonomous PCEA establishing similar formal norms for the Maasai churches it governs today without careful consideration of the unique distinctives of Maasai culture.

#### *Africanizing Christian Worship*

In what was a provocative analysis of the missionary movement of his day, the writings of Roland Allen still challenge those involved in current mission leadership development. Allen's best known and often cited work traces the ministry and method of Paul comparing current missionary methodologies with those of the Apostle. With regard to the indigenous church, Allen is straightforward in his analysis. Paul spent relatively short times at the various population centers where he preached. In times as short as five months (Thessalonica), Paul trained



leaders in the basic Gospel, the celebration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and a dependence on the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. His goal was to see the indigenous church established, not to form a mission or institution. He therefore preached, taught, ordained elders, and then, after a short period of residence, left the church to grow on its own, making only brief, if any, visits in the future.

Occasionally, he wrote letters to encourage, correct, and further instruct. Allen laments the fact that too many times these basic principles have been ignored resulting in the institution of a mission rather than assisting in the birth of an independent church.<sup>93</sup>

Timothy Fairman, Presbyterian (USA) missionary among the Maasai in the early 1980's, writes that there is a potential for schism in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa among the Maasai. Citing authoritarian practices by the largely Kikuyu PCEA leadership to impose culturally insensitive rules of order and worship on Maasai churches, Fairman believes that Maasai churches of the PCEA are facing pressure toward becoming separatist churches.<sup>94</sup> While a separate Maasai Church has not yet been formed, there is current anecdotal evidence of heated discussion around this issue and citations that some key PCEA lay evangelists and prominent PCEA members have recently changed denominational affiliation.<sup>95</sup> Moses Pulei, a

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<sup>93</sup>Allen, *Missionary Methods*. See especially Chapter 8, "The Teaching of Converts," 109-126 and Chapter 9, "The Training of Candidates for Baptism and Ordination," 127-143.

<sup>94</sup>Fairman, "Maasai Evangelism," 81-99 and 139-163.

<sup>95</sup>In my pastoral visitations of Olooseos Parish in 1990, 1994, and 1999, I met with many Maasai PCEA leaders and members, heard these discussions for separation, and noted those evangelists and members who had abandoned the PCEA affiliating with other denominations. In a number of these instances, it seemed that those changing affiliations considered the AIC as being more open to Maasai leadership and cultural expression. Furthermore, a former Maasai PCEA leader who

PCEA Maasai graduate student at Fuller Theological Seminary, cites the recent parish division in the PCEA which clusters all Maasai churches in geographical mission areas in and of themselves as a first sign of rift.<sup>96</sup> While this division is not a dissident church, it is a marked separation that is likely to produce further alienation of Maasai Presbyterians from others in the PCEA. In order to prevent the development of a schism and to develop local PCEA churches that are truly Maasai, changes in practices of worship, formal rules of order, and leadership conventions must be considered.

Maasai Christians worshipping in PCEA churches have largely not had the opportunity to make their churches their own. Authentic Maasai Christian worship, if it can be allowed to develop, may look different from other forms of western or African Christian worship. Even so, Christian faith has the ability to authentically embrace culture while maintaining itself as authentic Christianity. John Mbiti writes, "We have to Africanise Christianity, that is give it an indelible African character. It is not enough to transplant prefabricated Christianity from Rome or Geneva to Kampala or Lagos.... We have to produce a type of Christianity here which will bear the imprint MADE IN AFRICA."<sup>97</sup> In a similar manner, Andrew Walls discusses what he calls the indigenizing principle. The overarching desire of any people group is to indigenize, to make whatever is introduced to them part and parcel of themselves. Drawing on the core of the Gospel message of Christ

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was not allowed to pursue ministerial training in that denomination is now enrolled in the Narok AIC pastoral training institute and serving an AIC Maasai parish.

<sup>96</sup>Moses Sinet Pulei, telephone interview by author, 15 June 2000, Fuller Theological Seminary.

<sup>97</sup>John Mbiti, *The Crisis of Mission in Africa* (Munko: Uganda Church Press, 1971), 3.

accepting us as we are, Walls makes the assertion that Christ accepts our unique cultural heritage as well and thus the church in different places will look different. This is “one unvarying feature in Christian history: the desire to ‘indigenize,’ to live as a Christian and yet as a member of one's own society, to make the Church *A Place to Feel at Home*.”<sup>98</sup> While Christ may readily accept the uniqueness and diversity of creation's cultural milieu, it is often difficult to convince human-led organizations of that same worth.

There are initiatives ongoing in Africa being led by Africans to reform Christian worship to more appropriate African forms. One such effort is the Africa Association for Liturgy, Music and the Arts (AFALMA) which was established in 1986 in Zambia at a World Council of Churches' sponsored event. Rev. Samuel Mbambo, AFALMA-Namibia Coordinator, states what he sees as the AFALMA purpose, “The purpose of the Association is to mobilise the African churches to make Christian worship on the continent more meaningful by promoting renewal in liturgy, music and the arts, and thus bringing African cultural values into universal Christian worship.”<sup>99</sup> Catholic missionary to East Africa, Adrian Hastings, considered the “Africanization of Church structures, of liturgy and art, and music, and leadership” to be paramount for the future of the indigenous church in East Africa.<sup>100</sup>

In a paper given at a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Movements on

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<sup>98</sup>Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 7.

<sup>99</sup>Samuel Mbambo in Christo Lombard, ed., *Worshipping God As Africans* (Windhoek, Namibia: EIN Publications, 1995), 78-79.

<sup>100</sup>Adrian Hastings, *African Christianity* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976), 251-252.

Campus, at the University of Namibia, 23 August 1995, the Hon. Dr. Zephaniah Kameeta told a group of students, "As Africans we cannot worship God as Europeans, Asians or Americans. We are Africans and we worship God as Africans. To deny what we are and to worship God as someone else is to deny our very existence and creation by God."<sup>101</sup> Finally, J.H. Nketia summarizes,

In considering the peculiar problems of worship raised by the Church in Africa, therefore, we must keep in mind two points: the necessity to maintain the traditional features of Christian worship, features which have always characterized Christian worship and which must be perpetuated in all lands where Christ is worshipped; and the Reformation principle of bringing the Christian Faith home to the minds of ordinary people in the 'language' they understand, the term 'language' meaning not only the spoken or written language but also art forms which are part of a people's learned behavior....The purpose of Africanization, then, is not the abandonment of worship which is Christocentric in all its essential aspects—in its language, prayer, hymns and ritual—but simply the use of more homely means of expressing or ordering the essential aspects of Christian worship so that the African worshipper can understand and feel deeply as he worships.<sup>102</sup>

This can be applied to the Maasai in the study area. The next chapter outlines the process for the examination of current worship practice, the acceptance of Maasai culture in the church, and the means utilized for the training of PCEA Maasai evangelists and worship leaders. The data resulting from this process will be used to continue addressing the research question, "To what extent and in what ways has the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa taken into account the distinctives of Maasai culture?"

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<sup>101</sup>Zephaniah Kameeta in *Worshipping God As Africans*, 97.

<sup>102</sup>J.H. Nketia, "The Contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship" in Ram Desai, ed., *Christianity in Africa as Seen by the Africans* (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1962), 116.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MAASAI CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND THE PARTICIPATORY RURAL/RAPID APPRAISAL METHOD

#### PRA: Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal

#### *The Setting of the Study and Maasai Participation*

When considering the history of the Maasai people and their tendency for active self-expression, one must consider if Maasai Christian worship practice is congruent with their normal cultural expression. This thesis examines the worship practice of Maasai churches in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. More specifically, and in order to ascertain the extent to which worship and worship leadership training has taken into account the unique culture and traditions of the Maasai people, the field work concentrates on the worship practice of the PCEA congregations in three mission areas: *Olchoronyori, Injashat, Ewuaso*. The intention of this chapter, therefore, is to describe in a largely narrative form the methodology process by which the field work was undertaken and the data collected. Because of the methodology employed to conduct this case study, it is necessary to be specific in showing some evidence of the community's participation and acceptance of the study in their home areas. The following chapter will present that data. As noted at the end of the previous chapter, these three mission areas were divided from a much larger parish. At the time of this field research, there were thirty-five churches in total in these three mission areas. These individual churches



range in size from a handful of people gathering under a tree, to hundreds gathered in a stone-constructed building. Geographically speaking, they range from easily accessed church plots just off main tarmac roads to ones in the outermost reaches of the bush country.

Upon undertaking such a research project, the difficulties of past development and church projects in the area were considered as review of various research methodologies to accomplish the task to take place.<sup>1</sup> For many church organizations, government groups, and students, much of what has been accomplished in the area of this study has been of an extraction mode with very little participation on the part of those involved and very little benefit to local Maasai communities. It was very important to the writer that, not only did local communities approve of and support this research, but that they also were a very intricate part of its development, undertaking, and analysis. Furthermore, if such an undertaking realized any benefit, those involved, as well as the broader Maasai communities, would share in that gain.

Taking a cue from a research methodology course with Dr. Simon McGrath at the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh,<sup>2</sup> I contacted three Maasai concerning an appropriate research methodology for this project. In conversations with Moses Sinet Pulei, a graduate student at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California who is a Maasai from the very region in which this

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<sup>1</sup>In the previous chapter, some details were given on challenges faced by the Maasai Action For Self Improvement, the Maasai Rural Development Centre, and the African Institute for Scientific Research and Development.

<sup>2</sup>Simon McGrath, course title: "Methodological and Practical Issues in Researching Africa," Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, Winter Term, 2000.

study would take place, it became apparent that a method which involved a large-scale participation on the part of the local Maasai community would be necessary to have enough credibility in their communities to be considered valid in the local context. Pulei was very critical of those who simply come in and go out, extracting resources, information, and people from his home area.<sup>3</sup> In a similar manner, the Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi, the PCEA parish minister for the *Ewuaso* mission area, felt that a method involving leaders in each church being studied would have the most impact.<sup>4</sup> Finally, contact was made with the writer's longtime friend and colleague, Benson Lenayia Ole Kurraru, a Maasai evangelist with the African Inland Church and officer of the Maasai Christian Youth Fellowship (MCYF).<sup>5</sup> Kurraru suggested using the *enkomono* (fellowship) model used in past local evangelist training which involved bringing leaders together for counsel and training followed by going out with common purpose.

Given these conversations and additional research and study, it became apparent that participation of the local Maasai community would be key in the undertaking of this fieldwork. On the one hand, there are several models of research that involve participation of some degree; on the other hand, there are very few models that allow the local community to shape the research, participate in its undertaking, and have a genuine say in its final analysis. Thorough participation at all stages by community leaders and by the communities to be researched would be

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<sup>3</sup>Moses Sinet Pulei, telephone interview by author, 15 June 2000, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

<sup>4</sup>Stephen Mparinkoi's opinion was expressed in a series of e-mail exchanges with the writer, July-December 2000.

<sup>5</sup>Benson Lenayia Ole Kurraru, e-mail exchanges, September 2000.

essential to the success of the field work and the eventual ownership of its results by Maasai Christians in the mission areas.

Since participation would be a key ingredient to any methodology selected, other factors surrounding Maasai culture that might have an impact on the research method selected were weighed. After hearing from Kurraru, it was clear that observing thirty-five different churches was a large undertaking. In addition, the fact was brought to light that news travels very fast from community to community in the bush country where Maasai people live. This is especially true on weekly market days when vehicles ply the roadways and bush tracks carrying people, products, and news from one region to the next. As noted in an earlier chapter,<sup>6</sup> an important part of Maasai culture is *ainos ilomon* (eating the news) which, for research method selection, cautioned that what was going on in a church on the *Ngong Hills* would be made known to churches in the *Ewuaso Kedong* in a very short amount of time. This meant that if only one person were to visit these churches over a period of many months, the churches would very likely be aware of many of the details of the study and might give skewed answers and/or conduct special worship services for the day of observation. Again, speaking by telephone with Moses Sinet Pulei for his counsel on the matter resulted in his reasoning that the only way to obtain an accurate observation would be to attempt to observe *all* the worship services at *all* these churches *all* on the same Sunday. At that point, the need to find a research methodology that could be accomplished in a rapid manner became crucial. In addition to the methodology, it was also important to find out if this could be undertaken practically. Contacting Benson and Pastor Stephen again in

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<sup>6</sup>See the discussion of greeting customs on page 32 and *ainos ilomon* on page 46 of this thesis.

Kenya, they affirmed that this was a good idea and one they thought could actually be undertaken and completed in one day. Both Benson and Pastor Stephen were aware of the need to be discreet when speaking of the specific details of the study since alerting parishioners to the exact observation purpose might skew the results. After gathering more information regarding research methods and exploring the practical details of its undertaking, one particular methodology seemed to best meet the needs of this case study.

### *Overview Of Participatory Methodology*

A methodology that addresses the unique needs and challenges of this research that were mentioned by my Maasai colleagues is the PRA method. This method, often used in areas of development studies, traditionally stands for Participatory Rural Appraisal or Participatory Rapid Appraisal, hence the acronym PRA. In recent years, concern developed over this nomenclature and this led some to substitute other words for the “rural” and “rapid,” such as “relaxed.” While the PRA label is common nomenclature, it is wise to be aware that all participatory methods are not conducted in a rural setting and much research completed in a rushed manner is flawed. As an outgrowth of another research method called Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), PRA tended to involve those with a stake in the study in the planning and implementation of the particular research. Furthermore, the academic journal *RRA Notes* was renamed *PLA (Participatory Learning and Action) Notes* indicating this shift in thinking.<sup>7</sup> Robert Chambers, professor at the Institute of

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<sup>7</sup>The numerical ordering of the journal remained consistent, however, numbers 1-21 were designated *RRA Notes* (Rapid Rural Appraisal) and numbers 22-32 saw the new name *PLA Notes* (Participatory Learning and Action) take effect.

Development Studies at the University of Sussex, suggests that “some are beginning to use PRA to stand for Participatory Reflection and Action, because at the core for what good PRA has become are self-critical awareness, personal behavior and attitudes and engagement with action.”<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the clearest distinction between these two methodologies is that RRA is primarily a way for outsiders to gather information whereas PRA is a process that empowers indigenous people to look closely at a specific part of their life and make community decisions with this information. It is legitimate for information from PRA to be utilized outside the local community in research purposes provided the local community is aware of this usage. In addition, the individual or group facilitating the PRA must be ready to assist the local community’s action decisions resulting from the PRA in any way possible.

The emphasis of participation of local communities in evaluation of their own issues and the sharing of decision making powers with these same communities has become a widespread practice in both secular and ecclesiastical organizations. It is estimated that organizations in at least 100 countries utilize PRA, and PRA information networks exist in no less than 30.<sup>9</sup> According to a recent document, the USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation is promoting participation in all aspects of its development work.<sup>10</sup> For a number of years, the

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<sup>8</sup>Robert Chambers, *Relaxed and Participatory Appraisal* (1999), Internet: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/participation/index.html>, Accessed 5 December 2000.

<sup>9</sup>*IDS Policy Briefing*, Issue 7 (August 1996), Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, Internet: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/briefs/brief7.html>, Accessed 21 October 2002.

<sup>10</sup>*Conducting a Participatory Evaluation*, USAID, Number 1, PN-ABS-539, (1996), 1.



Heifer Project International, a Christian development organization providing animals and appropriate technology to developing countries, has utilized participatory evaluation.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the Catholic Relief Services also have a history of involvement with participatory evaluation in their development and assistance work.<sup>12</sup> In both government and church arenas, participatory research and evaluation has been in place since the later 1980's and "provides for active involvement in the evaluation process of those with a stake in the program."<sup>13</sup> There are now a number of variations on the theme of participation such as PAR: Participatory Action Research, PLA: Participatory Learning and Action, PPA: Participatory Poverty Assessment, and PME: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation.<sup>14</sup>

The determination to employ a PRA methodology of research supported the goals of obtaining the community's approval for a study, fully and meaningfully involving the community being studied, and providing the opportunity for the

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<sup>11</sup>For a brief history of and future vision for the Heifer Project's involvement in participatory research see Jerry Aaker and Jennifer Shumaker, *Looking Back and Looking Forward: A Participatory Approach to Evaluation* (Little Rock, Arkansas: Heifer Project International), 1994.

<sup>12</sup>For an overview of the CRS method see Juki Aubel, *Participatory Program Evaluation: A Manual for Involving Program Stakeholders in the Evaluation Process* (New York: Catholic Relief Services), 1994.

<sup>13</sup>USAID, *Participatory Evaluation*, 1 and Chambers, *Participatory Appraisal*, 3.

<sup>14</sup>The Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK maintains a current link to resources and networks of those involved in participatory evaluation worldwide at <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/index.html>. See also W.F. Whyte, *Participatory Action Research*, (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications), 1991.

communities being studied to share in any gains derived from the study. With support from the three Maasai advisors and approval of academic supervisors, this project moved ahead in developing a PRA research model specific for examining Maasai Christian worship and worship leader training in the PCEA.

### *Benefits and Limitations of PRA in Maasai Research*

In selecting the PRA (Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal) as the research methodology for this study, the benefits and pitfalls of such an approach were considered. For this project, utilizing the PRA method would allow participant involvement in the process as well as participant ownership of and commitment to the results. Furthermore, the PRA method allows a broad scope of participation of local Maasai communities; it allows for a diversity of viewpoints to be expressed; it allows learning to take place as a process within community rather than top-down instruction and direction; it is flexible in its design and implementation; it regards outside leadership more in terms of facilitating rather than dictating. Finally, the PRA method allows for a rapid conduct of research and field appraisals. Given some of the concerns previously enumerated by several Maasai leaders, this research methodology best fit the task at hand.

Nevertheless, there are several critiques of the PRA method.<sup>15</sup> Two of these assessments are of particular interest to this study. The first is the imposition of the

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<sup>15</sup>For these and other critiques see, *IDS Policy Briefing*, Issue 7 (August 1996), Institute for Development Studies, Internet: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/briefs/brief7.html>, Accessed 21 October 2002, 2 and Robert Chambers, *Relaxed and Participatory Appraisal* (1999), Internet: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/participation/index.html>, Accessed 5 December 2000, 5 and 8 and the extensive web site on PRA maintained by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, <http://www.ids.ac.uk>.

ideas of someone or some group from outside of a community upon the ideas of those living within a specific society. This is a particularly difficult area for those researchers from the West who often have definite ideas, financial backing, and are culturally accustomed to being demonstratively assertive. This becomes especially poignant when the one instigating the study has an organization's program money to administer or a proper Ph.D. field work to conduct. The second area of concern is that of rushing the research. In some cases, poorly conducted PRA finds field researchers rapidly conducting inadequate research, returning to their home country, and producing results without community input. Special attention must be paid to the tendency of rushing research in the PRA method and the wholesale taking of information without community involvement. In order to legitimately ascertain a particular community's ideas and conclusions, adequate time must be given for indigenous input and evaluation while keeping in mind the need to maintain a neutral arena so as to promote accurate appraisal.

With regard to the caution of imposing one's outside views on a community, this field work study took special care to minimize this area of concern to the greatest extent possible. As is often the case, outside involvement in Maasai communities often means Maasai people themselves are powerless in any areas of decision-making and policy. This was made evident in the previous chapter through the examples of the Maasai Rural Development Centre (MRDC), the Maasai Action for Self Improvement (MASI), and the African Institute for Scientific Research and Development (AISRED) projects.<sup>16</sup> While readily acknowledged that this study in its entirety would probably not have occurred without the pursuit of it as part of an

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<sup>16</sup>See pages 123-128 of this thesis.

academic field work project, every opportunity was taken to allow, encourage, and sustain community involvement from the planning, to the implementation, to the evaluation, and to the final application of the results. As mentioned earlier, from the very beginning involvement of three Maasai consultants from the area being studied helped probe the initial thinking through of appropriate subjects and methods to use for the study. Only after a consensus did implementation of the project take place. In addition, my having an ongoing twenty-year relationship with Maasai culture through frequent travel and mission service greatly assisted in establishing the community rapport necessary to implement such a study. Nevertheless, as it will become evident in further explanation of the actual field work involved in this project, my role as leader took on the characteristic of a facilitator rather than a director. This factor of attitudinal change made an enormous difference in the perception and acceptance of those involved in the study and the reception of the individual observers in the field. From the onset of the project, intentional effort was made to blur the lines between “I” and “you,” so that, in this study, “we” proceeded with the overall understanding that everyone involved was on, more or less, the same footing.

With regard to the caution concerning the rushing of a research project, there is a distinction between a valid, rapid study of a situation and research that is forced because of rushing. Situations of crisis, such as famine or disaster, often necessitates quick studies, analysis, and recommendations for action. There are other situations, such as the migratory patterns of peoples, which also make a rapid study more effective. On the other hand, rushing through a research project because of donor restrictions, academic or publication deadlines, or convenience, more often

than not, produces questionable results and, in the eyes of PRA advocates, serves to discredit PRA as a reliable research tool.<sup>17</sup> While it was necessary in the case of this particular study to conduct the PRA in a rapid fashion, it was not at all rushed. For instance, the primary target date for conducting the PRA in Maasai PCEA churches was set as well as provisional follow-up visitations on subsequent Sundays if necessary. During the entire course of the study, my research assistant and I stayed in a Maasai community; we were not in a rush to get back to western comforts of a city hotel. This commitment to be living among the people where the study took place helped to greatly increase the interest and enthusiasm of the communities involved. No one felt rushed; there was always plenty of time for *chai* and conversation.<sup>18</sup>

### *PRA: Maasai Christian Worship Observation and Interviews*

#### *Preparation and Training*

In order to avoid some of the pitfalls mentioned above, adequate preparation and advanced planning was essential well before the initiation of this study. This narrative form describes the preparations, plans, and procedures of the actual field work study of Maasai Christian worship in PCEA congregations located in the *Olchoronyori, Injashat, and Ewuaso* mission areas.

In November 2000, immediately after this thesis proposal received approval,

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<sup>17</sup>See: *Conducting a Participatory Evaluation*, USAID, Number 1, PN-ABS-539, (1996), 3 and Robert Chambers, *Relaxed and Participatory Appraisal* (1999), Internet: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/participation/index.html>, Accessed 5 December 2000, 5 and 8.

<sup>18</sup>*Chai* is a highly sugared, tea and milk drink, served piping hot. In most instances, Maasai people deem it inappropriate to be in such a rush as to not sit for *chai* and conversation.

preparatory work began in earnest. The proliferation of facsimile machines and e-mail capabilities in East Africa made communication much easier and much more efficient than has been the case in previous decades. Pastor Stephen Mparinkoi and Benson Lenayia Ole Kurraru both had access to a shop in a local trading center that allowed for e-mail sending and receiving. Maasai academic colleague, Moses Sinet Pulei, made himself available by both e-mail and telephone. Over the course of the next few months, Pastor Stephen and Benson agreed to serve as local Maasai leaders and organizers for the study and Moses, studying in the United States, agreed to take an advisory role in the entire process. Pastor Stephen provided a listing of all the PCEA churches in these three mission areas as well as a name of the evangelist or church elder assigned to work at each. Benson began to recruit field observers. Although Benson gave general information to these recruits, he protected the specific details and dates of the PRA survey so that the particular congregations would not deviate from their normal routine when visited. Moses gave suggestions for culturally appropriate ways to ask survey questions at the particular churches. The Clerk of the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery of the PCEA received a letter requesting permission to conduct this research project in their churches and returned an affirmative response. Furthermore, Jack Beuttell, sociology of religion student at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, agreed to join the PRA leadership team, travel to Kenya, and serve as a primary research assistant for the administration, analysis, and evaluation of the PCEA Maasai Church PRA in Africa.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>The PRA leadership team for this study consisted of Stephen Mparinkoi, Benson Lenayia Ole Kurraru, Moses Sinet Pulei, Jack Beuttell, and Fred Foy Strang.



The next step was to pinpoint a time to undertake the research. In consultation with Pastor Stephen, Benson, and Moses, it seemed that May and June 2001 would be ideal. This was a period prior to the arrival of short-term work groups from the United States and other countries, but after the long rains when transportation to most of the churches being observed would be impossible. In ensuing dialogue with Pastor Stephen, it became evident that some of the observers to the thirty-five congregations would not be well received if it were not communicated to the churches that the visiting observers had appropriate ecclesiastical permission and pastoral blessing on the endeavor. Without giving away the exact purpose of observing actual, ordinary worship practice throughout the region or giving the specific date when these observers would visit, Pastor Stephen began to inform the churches that a PCEA approved visitor would be coming to each congregation as part of a study being conducted in the area under the direction of the author and a team of Maasai leaders.<sup>20</sup> As far as I am aware, this news was accepted without concern.

As plans began to formalize, the PRA methodology worked splendidly. It was extremely difficult not to step in and run the organization of the entire worship observations. Even after twenty years of working among the Maasai in Kenya, it was difficult to fathom how my Maasai colleagues and I would orchestrate this simultaneous observation of thirty-five churches in such an enormously large geographic area. To make matters even more complicated, most of the churches being observed were well off the normal tracks of road commerce. With constant

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<sup>20</sup>Every effort was made to conform to PCEA protocol and Presbyterian ecclesiastical requirements. Receiving proper permission to conduct this study and informing local congregations that it would occur satisfied these requirements.

opportunities for the counsel of these local Maasai leaders, the PRA leadership team arranged the logistics of this project.

As the days moved forward, the successes in organizing and implementing such a gigantic task began to show giving confidence to the PRA leadership team. The very competent African leaders on this team undertook many of the on-site logistics involved in arranging this study. Without any prompting on my part, an e-mail was received from Benson in the spring of 2001 detailing the names of the churches to be observed and the observers that he had contracted to do the PRA study. In addition, Pastor Stephen and Benson had discussed and determined a fair price to pay each observer and queried if that amount would be an acceptable rate.<sup>21</sup> With agreements made about the payment of fieldworkers who would be surveying the churches and Benson's detailed church-observer listing, the PRA leadership team scheduled an observer-training workshop in Kenya for May 2001. Benson secured a training facility for the thirty-five observers and arranged for cooks and supplies for the weekend pre-field orientation observer training. The Maasai Christian Youth Fellowship (MCYF) agreed to hire their camp facility, *Camp Mwamba*, located on a picturesque site high on the *Ngong Hills* for both the observer training workshop and the follow-up evaluation of the PRA with church leaders.<sup>22</sup> During the same time, Moses Pulei and I were working on the PRA worship observation report and survey questions. After researching ideas and concept questions, I would draft a rough translation, sending it on to Moses for correction and cultural screening. As the time drew nearer, the entire manuscript

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<sup>21</sup>See footnote 29 on page 160 of this thesis for an explanation of the salary structure paid to the observers and other research assistants.

<sup>22</sup>*Mwamba*, the Swahili word for rock, refers to the terrain around the camp.

traveled by e-mail to Benson, for his language review. Both Moses and Benson were able to edit my renderings of *ol Maa* and put questions into more correct cultural context where needed. For this study, it was very important to employ correct language as that, in itself, conveys credibility and authenticity.<sup>23</sup>

On 24 May 2001, Benson, Pastor Stephen, Jack Beuttell, and I met in Kenya for a final planning session prior to the pre-field orientation for the research assistants who would be conducting the PRA observations and surveys. The community's response to this activity was impressive. The MCYF, owners of *Camp Mwamba*, provided cooks and other services and people to help facilitate the training camp. The word had been put out to all of the research assistants to come to *Camp Mwamba* Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup> for orientation and training in the conduct of the research. The actual PRA survey date remained unknown to the observers until this training seminar.

Thirty-five field observers attended the pre-field orientation for research assistants. In addition to these men and women, Pastor Stephen, Benson, and a number of MCYF members also attended. Pastor Stephen, Benson, and I jointly led the training of the observers in order to communicate precisely what needed to be done and how to go about it in order that each church was appraised in the same manner. One interesting fact emerged in the training that highlights the value of the

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<sup>23</sup>See Thomas and Elizabeth Brewster, *Language Learning Is Communication, Is Ministry!* (Pasadena: Lingua House, 1982). They also quote missionary anthropologist Charles Kraft who advocates language acquisition as the primary missionary task: "Indeed if we do no more than engage in the process of language learning we will have communicated more of the essentials of the gospel than if we devote ourselves to any other task I can think of." Brewster and Brewster, *Language Learning*, 1. Moses, Benson, and Pastor Stephen are all fluent speakers of the English language and have long served in translator roles for various church groups. Moses has the greatest command of the English language in written form as he is a Ph.D. candidate at Fuller Theological Seminary in the United States.

selected methodology. As the observers were going over the survey questions that each was to ask of ten individuals at each church site, there was a discrepancy regarding the meaning of two questions. Even after thorough work on the initial translation which was previously edited by both Moses and Benson, in this group of forty Maasai men and women, it became clear that a couple of the questions were not worded correctly and would lead to ambiguity.

In order to affirm the actual working of the PRA model and to obtain some insight into the unique cultural challenges of this study, it is helpful to briefly note these two translation difficulties. On survey question number eight, concerning freedom to wear traditional Maasai clothing in worship, there emerged the need to also include in the question the word *o masaa*, which refers to all the beaded adornments worn by men and women. This change seemed to better convey the entire dress of Maasai people, rather than only the cloth or leather wraps around their bodies. On several of the other questions involving a scale, the observers preferred the Maasai term *mee oleng* as a neutral response rather than *onusu* (half). *Oleng* is the singular form of *aleng* meaning “to be abundant”; hence, *mee oleng* could be translated “not abundant” or “not much.” The observers were comfortable to have *nusu nusu*, a commonly used word among Maasai people borrowed from the Swahili language and meaning “in the middle” or “so, so” as a back up for clarification, if necessary. Survey questions number seven and nine prompted much discussion regarding the correct word to convey culture or traditions. Originally, the PRA team had suggested the words *impukunot*, meaning customs and habits or *embae* meaning customs, but, after much discussion, this was rejected by those gathered for training. Instead the word *olkuak* was used which contains the nuance

of actual behavioral practice as well as more static customs and seems to be aligned more readily with the English language concept of culture. This concept of cultural expression in the church proved to be one of vital interest and unexpected survey results. Explanation of this follows in the next chapter. So, with these corrections, on-site editing, and an arduous trip to Nairobi to make new photocopies, each observer was equipped with ten corrected surveys.

The basic protocol for each field worker involved: traveling to a particular PCEA parish, observing the church site, the activities of the congregation, and the worship service itself, and responding to a series of written prompts comprising the Worship Observation Report.<sup>24</sup> In addition, each observer had basic training in simple photography, was supplied with a camera, and instructed to take a prescribed series of pictures. The observation reports and the cameras were coded for each church. Finally, each observer was instructed to ask ten worship attendees, selected at random, but including both men and women, to respond to a survey. Within the parameters of standardized survey research, this questioning of worship attendees would be classified in the realm of non-probability sampling.<sup>25</sup> Given this classification, the worship survey results, in and of themselves, cannot be employed in generalizations beyond the boundaries of the mission areas studied. These surveys were in the language of *ol Maa*, but versions in the Swahili and English languages were also provided in the event a participant did not speak the Maasai language. In areas known to have a higher concentration of non-Maasai speakers,

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<sup>24</sup>See Appendix 3 for the Worship Observation Report form.

<sup>25</sup>Louis Rea and Richard Parker, *Designing and Conducting Survey Research* (CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1997), 139.

extra copies of the Swahili version were provided.<sup>26</sup> Again, the surveys were coded to the pre-assigned church codes and each question was coded according to standard statistical procedure.<sup>27</sup> Because this study was to investigate an attitudinal sense concerning worship, statistical practice suggested a Likert Scale series of questions about worship. Questions formulated using this scale asked respondents to use a rating system selecting from very positive, positive, neutral, negative, and very negative responses to the questions. As part of the observer training, the field workers divided up into pairs and practiced asking questions one to another while being observed by the core leadership team. The following series of photographs from the observer training of the late spring of 2001 visually illustrates the commitment of this group of people to conduct the PRA with enthusiasm and expertise.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>See Appendix 4 for the Worship Survey in the Maasai language; Appendix 5 contains the Worship Survey in the Swahili language; Appendix 6 contains the Worship Survey in the English language.

<sup>27</sup>Rea and Parker, *Survey Research*, 65-80.

<sup>28</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, JackMwambaPFO.jpeg, PFOMwamba1.jpeg, PFOPhoto1Mwamba.jpeg, BensonSurveys.jpeg, PFOGroup1Mwamba.jpeg.





Fig. 52. Jack Beuttell (r) with Observers.

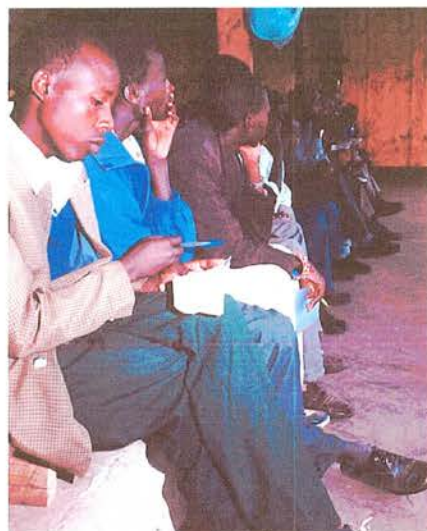


Fig. 53. Observer Training (2001).



Fig. 54. Observers Practicing Photography Skills.



Fig. 55. Benson Ole Kurraru.



Fig. 56. Partial Group of Observers at Training (2001).

Perhaps one of the most encouraging aspects of the PRA observer training was the enthusiasm with which the field researchers engaged the project. Although the thirty-five men and women, for the most part, did not know one another, through a series of interactive games and mixers, as well as the actual preparation to conduct the observation and surveys, the field workers truly got to know one another well. As the first day of the training concluded, the observers' vested interests in the worship research project became evident. Just before the evening meal, Jackson Pulei, one of the researchers and a member of the MCYF, said that everyone wanted to have a time of worship and asked how I wanted to conduct the worship service for that evening. While it would be a joy to participate, I told Jackson it was entirely up to those gathered as to how to proceed with an evening worship plan. At dinnertime, Jackson announced there would be a time of worship shortly after the meal and those with a song or testimony to share should be prepared. The observers, it seemed, not only wanted to help in the conduct of worship research, but also take advantage of the opportunity presented to them for their own worship together.

Later that evening, the observers gathered and enjoyed a time of singing, prayer, and preaching. This spontaneous experience of locally organized worship was further evidence that the PRA methodology for the conduct of this field work was the correct selection. Those involved in the actual research and data-gathering mode were in fact vitally interested in the whole subject of Maasai Christian worship as it had a personal and deep impact in each of their lives.

*Implementation of the PRA for Maasai Christian Worship*

On the second day of observer training, with corrected surveys in hand, observers were paired with churches. Benson, Pastor Stephen and I had previously gone over protocols for assigning the observers to specific congregations. These simple, but important limitations were:

- 1) The observer could not be a member or attend regularly the church they were to observe.
- 2) The observer could not be related to, have a significant relationship with, or have business dealings with the evangelists of the church they were to observe.
- 3) The observer could not have difficulties or unreasonable discomfort visiting the church they were to observe (i.e. A person without adequate stamina would not be asked to walk great distances to reach a church meeting site).
- 4) The observer could not possess an obvious bias toward a particular area or people where they were to make their observations.

After an on-site review of these guidelines during preliminary preparations, the peculiarities of the particular churches and the background of each observer were considered in the assignment process. Benson and Pastor Stephen felt confident that the final matching of churches with field workers offered as unbiased and impartial an observation as possible.

Next, with great anticipation by the observers, the training focused on the topic of photography. Each observer was provided with a disposable 35mm camera

with pre-loaded film. After an instruction and practice session, each indicated that they were comfortable enough to make the necessary photographs at the church sites. Each observer received an identical listing of specific photographs to take at each site. The observers were also instructed to inform their particular church's leader that the church would receive copies of the pictures taken that day as well as a report at the conclusion of the study. With the observers now prepared and equipped, attention turned toward getting these men and women where they were going in a timely manner.

The PRA leadership team had gone to great lengths orchestrating the logistics of transporting each observer to each of the thirty-five congregations on the Sunday immediately following the training. Some would go by foot, walking miles to arrive at their church site; others would utilize public transportation; and quite a number would get there by means of hired vehicles that would drop them at their respective churches along a route outbound and collect them on the return journey later in the day. Benson arranged for each observer to arrive at the church site well prior to worship, where they would introduce themselves to the church leaders, and then conduct the necessary observations, surveys, and photography assignment.

These field workers were informed that the day after the observations, each observer was to bring their completed worship observation profile, their ten completed surveys, and their disposable camera back to the designated site. Benson selected his church, the African Inland Church's *Oreteti* congregation at *Corner Baridi*, as the collection and debriefing point because of its convenience to a main road, its location relative to the three mission areas, its convenience to the areas where many of the observers lived, and its denominational neutrality with regard to



the study. With questions and concerns addressed, transportation assigned, and prayers said, the observers packed up and headed back to their homes excited about the ensuing observations that would take place on Sunday morning, 27 May 2001.

That Sunday morning found Jack, Benson, and I headed into the *Ewuaso* area for worship at the PCEA *Olentoko* (E3) church, one of the thirty-five being observed. Although the church knew an “approved visitor” was to come, they were very happy to see the three of us. The church had not planned any kind of unusual service. It was a regular Sunday at *Olentoko*. Jack and my only participation in the service was the customary time given to visitors to stand and greet the congregation. The observer assigned to this church conducted the worship observation, administered the ten interviews, and made the requested photographs. It was important to see a church’s worship being observed so that we might be more effective in our debriefing time with the observers and the evangelists to follow. Trekking back to *Camp Mwamba* after the worship service at *Olentoko*, reports from a parishioner received along the way indicated that a number of the churches in this area had observers come to their worship services.

On Monday morning, May 28<sup>th</sup>, following the observations, the PRA leadership team gathered at the AIC *Oretiti* church at *Corner Baridi*. A three-hour window was set for the observers to make their way to the church building, to discuss the results of their field observations, and to turn in their materials. Waiting on Monday morning before the arrival of any observers, there was little preliminary indication regarding the number of churches that were successfully visited. It was unsettling to think of the large number of churches, the vast geographic spread of their locations, and the logistical difficulties associated with each visit.

Well before the appointed hour, observers began to arrive at the church building. As each one of came, Benson and Jack collected their materials which they then checked for completion and to see if any of the observer's writings needed to be deciphered. Cameras were also checked in. Each observer then sat down with Benson and me to discuss his or her perception of the observation and survey. Some wrote helpful comments in the space provided for such on the Worship Observation Report. After an observer received their salary and a large, *ashe oleng* (thank you), they departed for their home.<sup>29</sup> Without exception, every observer said that they particularly enjoyed the experience and the opportunity for their own reflection.

At the end of our check-in time, thirty-one of the thirty-five churches had reported in with complete surveys, observations, and photographs. There were only four churches that were unable to be visited on that first Sunday of observations. In fact, one of the churches had the observer present, but the church leaders in that particular congregation had not received word the visitor would be arriving, so did not allow that person to do their work. In one of the other churches missing the initial observation, the observer went as planned, but became lost in the bush as he tried to find the meeting place and missed the service completely. In the final two churches that missed the initial observation date, one observer simply overslept and

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<sup>29</sup>Each observer was paid KSH 1,500/ (at that time, the exchange rate was US \$1= KSH 75/ or £1 = KSH 120/) to compensate them for two days of training and one day of actual field observation. This rate was determined in consultation with Rev. Mparinkoi, Benson Kurraru, Moses Pulei, and several others in the local community. At the time of the field research, an agricultural laborer made approximately KSH 100/ for 5-6 hours work. Also, transportation costs and necessary meal expenses were covered for the observers and the observer-training workshop was completely cost-free to participants. While US \$20 or £12.50 may seem like a pittance for three days of work to those in other countries, it was a very generous, but contextually appropriate amount which was received with enthusiasm and gratitude by the observers. Key personnel, such as Benson Kurraru, received more compensation, while basic contract labor, such as the cooks, received less.



the other missed the transportation to the site. Benson quickly arranged to go see the church leaders of the congregation that questioned the observers' presence, and logistical arrangements were made for these few observers to return to their assigned church sites for observation visits. The four outstanding churches were successfully visited and their reports, surveys, and cameras were collected within the following two weeks.

In summary, thirty-one churches were visited on the first Sunday, two were visited the next Sunday, and the final two were visited the Sunday following that. The bottom-line result: Of the thirty-five congregations to be visited, thirty-five were visited within a very limited window of time for a 100 percent overall return rate of surveys, Worship Observation Reports, and cameras.

The following map (Fig. 57) entitled, "Map of PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat* and *Ewuaso* Mission Areas" shows the primary study area in detail with each church identified. In this rendering, the three mission areas are distinguished by different letters and color-codes. *Olchoronyori* (the spring which is green) is indicated by green to correspond to the Maasai meaning of the word; *Injashat* (the place of small valleys) with blue; and *Ewuaso* with brown as the place name refers to the *Ewuaso Ng'iro* (brown river). Bordering the *Ngong Hills*, *Camp Mwamba* (noted *M* on the map), site of both the Observer Training and the follow-up debriefing and evaluation with Maasai evangelists is noted as well as the *Corner Baridi* (noted *B* on the map) church where the observers turned in their materials. The previously mentioned Maasai Rural Development Centre at *Olooseos* is located at site "O1" and the MASI project at *Olosho-oibor* is located at the site "I3."

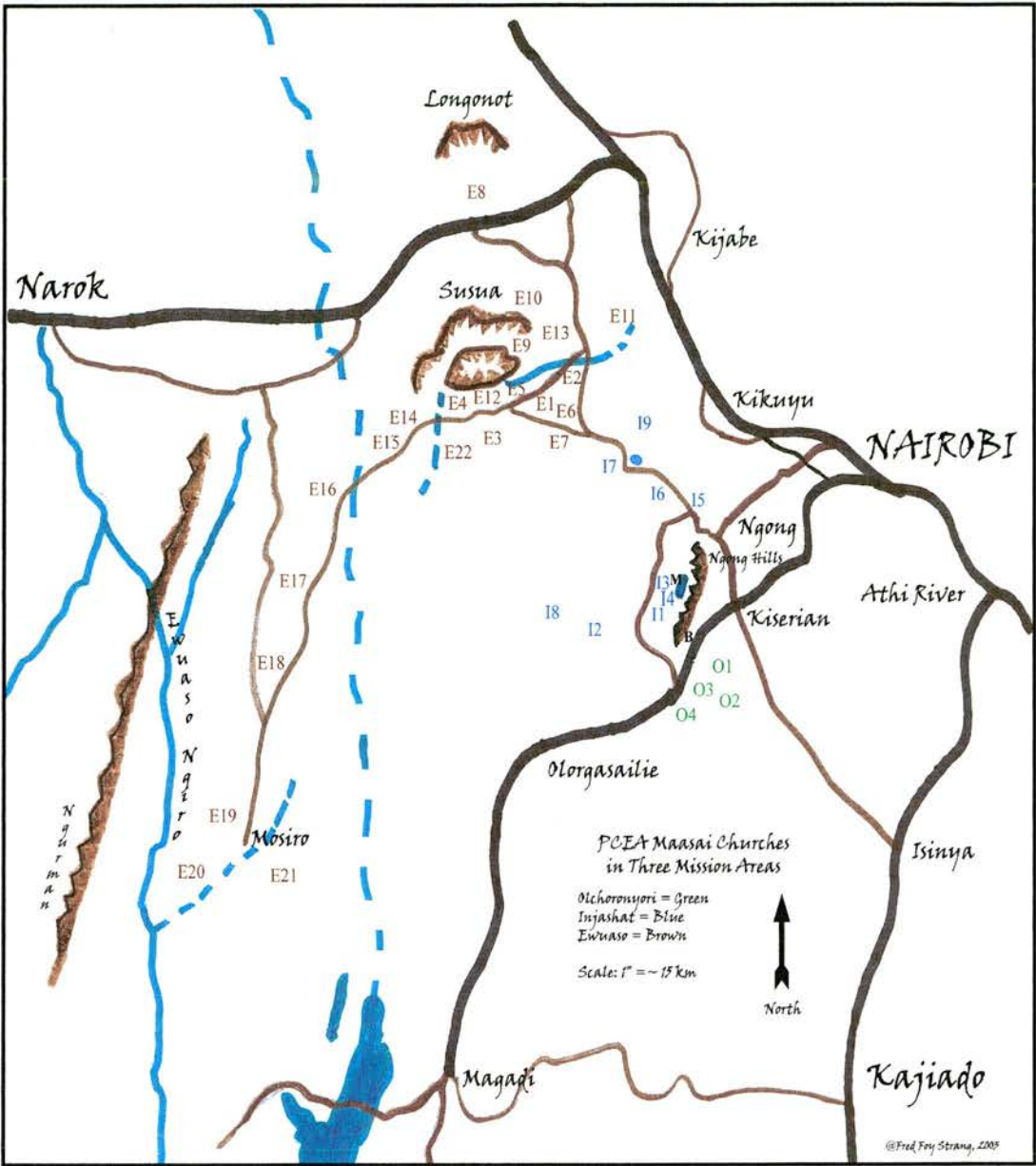


Fig. 57. Map of PCEA Churches in the Olchoronyori, Injashat, and Ewuaso Mission Areas.

While basic and perhaps even obvious, a brief explanation of the map and church coding is necessary for clarity. In the following chapter, the entire case study data is presented using these letter-number codes. Each church studied was assigned a code to correspond with its mission area. The *Olchoronyori* mission area was labeled “O,” the *Injashat* mission area was labeled “I,” and the *Ewuaso* mission area was labeled “E.” All the PCEA churches known to be established within the study area were part of the observation field work. There were four churches in the *Olchoronyori* area, nine in the *Injashat* area, and twenty-two in the *Ewuaso* area making up a grand total of thirty-five established PCEA churches between the three mission areas at the time of this study. A label of “O1” would indicate the particular church assigned “1” in the *Olchoronyori* mission area. Thus, O1 is the *Olooseos* church. The tables 2, 3, and 4 indicate the coding used for the churches studied. Using the map, “Map of PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat* and *Ewuaso* Mission Areas” (Fig. 57), and the code tables 2, 3, and 4, one may identify the mission area, the name, and the geographic location of each of the churches in this study. The map and tables are presented on the following pages for ease of reference.

Table 2. PCEA *Olchoronyori* Outreach Area

CODE (green)	CHURCH NAME	EVANGELIST	OBSERVER
O1	Olooseos	Stephen Kashonga	Lucy Lasoi
O2	Ilmasin	Jacob Roiko	Nelly Janai
O3	Oldanyati	Simon Kirrau	Isaac Moiko
O4	Olepolos	Simon Kirrau	Julius Kurraru

Table 3. PCEA *Injashat* Outreach Area

CODE (blue)	CHURCH NAME	EVANGELIST	OBSERVER
I1	Naironde	Moses Wuala	Stephen Sentero
I2	Ilingarooj	Paul Kisompkol	Francis Sakuda
I3	Olosho-oibor	Peter Sakuda	Amos Kaitei
I4	Olasist	Josphat Nagirro	Eunice Wuala
I5	Kimuka	None assigned	Simon Parkesian
I6	Olmaroroi	Amos Kaitei	James Makura
I7	Saikeri	Jeremia Tumanka	Victor Mpapayio
I8	Nasaru	Moses Matura	Victor Mpapayio
I9	Neson Koyo	Paul Kurarru	Stephen Mpoyo

Table 4. PCEA *Ewuaso* Outreach Area

CODE (brown)	CHURCH	EVANGELIST	OBSERVER
E1	Najile	Paulina Santai	Jackson Pulei
E2	Osero onyokie	Joseph Tumanka	Philip Murkuku
E3	Ole Ntoko	Samuel Matura	Benson Lenayai
E4	Olodungoro	Jeremia Suntai	Francis Mparikoi
E5	Enajooli	Ernest Sumok	Daniel Lotuno
E6	Ekusera Keri	Mary Mpaira	Priscilla Tekenet
E7	Olgarua	Paul Koilel	Magdalena Koilel
E8	Oloonongot	Johana Tumanka	Isaac Kipeen
E9	Olgumi	James Nkuito	Stephen Sentero
E10	Eluaai	Kennedy Matura	Peter Kerenke
E11	Empeut	Mathias Kanali	Daniel Nayau
E12	Ilgrooj	Enoc Matura	Joseph Tomanka
E13	Inkiushin	Paul Sekento	James Makura
E14	Soitamurt	Joseph Sayo	Moses Sekento
E15	Sairrashie	Mathia Kanali	Joseph Kasi
E16	Ereyiet oo Makesen	Daniel Olkeri	Samuel Tinkoi
E17	Ilkparakua	Paul Matura	Simon Ntakajai
E18	Olokeri	Mary Sina	Moses Teeka
E19	Oldorko	Moses Pariken	Justus Tira
E20	Kimelok	Silas Matura	Mary Matura
E21	Olokumukum	Tomas Leposo	Solomon Matura
E22	Olodungoro-oibor	Paulo Suntai	John Teeka



*Organization of the PRA for Maasai Christian Worship Data*

After receiving all the data, the next three days concentrated on sorting, organizing, and categorizing the information according to the churches represented. Upon completion of this task, Benson Kurraru reviewed the results and helped to clarify questionable phrasing. Benson was able to interpret some of the Maasai language written by the observers that was unidentifiable by the author. In addition, any other extraneous comments were discussed. In the next chapter, a representative sample of the type of data collected for each of the thirty-five churches will be presented.<sup>30</sup>

With this preliminary data in hand and in order to begin a community evaluation process, the next step of this field work assignment proceeded: the presentation of initial results to the area PCEA evangelists and a focus group discussion with them centered on some of the many issues at hand. Again with Benson's help, another meeting at *Camp Mwamba* had been arranged for 31 May to 2 June 2001. This meeting brought together the assigned PCEA evangelist from each church in the three mission areas. These evangelists were a completely distinct group from the PRA observers. These PCEA evangelists, both paid and volunteer, were the assigned church leaders for the particular congregations. As such, they had a dynamic interest in the data and discussions. The transportation cost for all the evangelists was paid along with their housing and meals. With Pastor Stephen, I

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<sup>30</sup> Additional data is contained on the supplemental compact disc. Appendix 1 lists contents and viewing instructions. A hard copy set of photographs and basic data sheets for each church studied is deposited in the Andrew Walls Library of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non Western World, New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Researchers may also wish to access the web site of the Maasai Special Projects Fund, Inc. for other downloadable academic and missiological resources at [www.mspfonline.org](http://www.mspfonline.org).



outlined the basic purpose of the field work study and invited each evangelist present to meet with me individually for a discussion. The evangelists were also informed that their churches would receive the data particular to their church and a set of photographs.

With each one, a field interview was conducted utilizing a standardized set of questions.<sup>31</sup> Of the thirty-five churches observed, there were personal interviews held with thirty-one representatives. Each interview ascertained the church represented, the status of the leader (whether an official paid PCEA evangelist or a volunteer), the outreach area and church served, and proceeded to ask five identical questions to each evangelist. Question number one referred to training, if any, the evangelist had secured in order to do his or her work. The second question inquired of the language ability of the individual evangelist. Question three dealt with the concerns the evangelists had in their particular church and ministry and, in a follow-up, question four inquired about needs of the particular church and the evangelist's ministry. Finally, question five sought an open ended response asking the individual evangelist if they had any other comments they would like to add to the discussion. The candid response of these men and women was very helpful in interpreting the raw data from the field work observations held earlier. Finally, at the conclusion of each interview, the evangelist and I spent time in prayer for their ministry and for their church. Each of the evangelists was anxious to speak with me and, by their enthusiastic participation, seemed to enjoy responding to the questions. They all

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<sup>31</sup>The field interview, also called "Key Informant Interview" by those in the field of participatory research, is an important component in an overall PRA case study. See *Conducting a Participatory Evaluation*, USAID, Number 1, PN-ABS-539, (1996), 4.

were deeply appreciative of the opportunity for a word of prayer together. This interview and sharing process helped to solidify the community's acceptance of the PRA based study that occurred in their particular communities. There was a real sense of care and concern shown by all participating parties further indicating community ownership of the study.

In addition to the interviews, one morning with the evangelists was spent in focus group discussions. Focus groups are an important part of survey research and fulfill a number of useful functions in a case study such as the derivation of opinion, the gathering of information, and the interpretation and augmentation of survey results.<sup>32</sup> The utilization of the evangelists to be focus group participants was an intentional decision as they would all be comfortable with one another and thus able to more freely discuss the matters put before them. Survey research specialists Rea and Parker write, "Focus groups are more effective when they consist of participants who share many of the same key characteristics. Homogeneous groups tend to exchange ideas and opinions more freely than do groups with widely divergent backgrounds."<sup>33</sup> This coterie of men and women was a homogeneous group in that all were of Maasai lineage, all held personal Christian convictions, and all held positions of leadership in their churches. The evangelists were randomly divided into four focus groups ranging from five to seven people in each group. Throughout the morning, each group considered a series of questions. The PRA leadership team had discussed pertinent questions that needed to be addressed by the evangelists in relation to the preliminary results of the observers' survey results, the issue of

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<sup>32</sup>Rea and Parker, *Survey Research*, 83.

<sup>33</sup>Rea and Parker, *Survey Research*, 84.

indigenization of worship, and concerns regarding worship leader training in PCEA Maasai churches. The questions were asked followed by a length of time of approximately one hour in which the focus groups would retire to a private place, many under the shade of an acacia tree, to discuss ideas resulting from the queries. A moderator was appointed for each group to keep the dialogue centered on the question, to take notes, and report for the particular group. In the next candid photograph, “Focus Group at *Camp Mwamba* (2001)” (Fig. 58), one can readily observe the rapt attention these evangelists gave to the focus group process, a further indication of the positive reception of the participatory method and a keen interest in the subjects being discussed.<sup>34</sup>

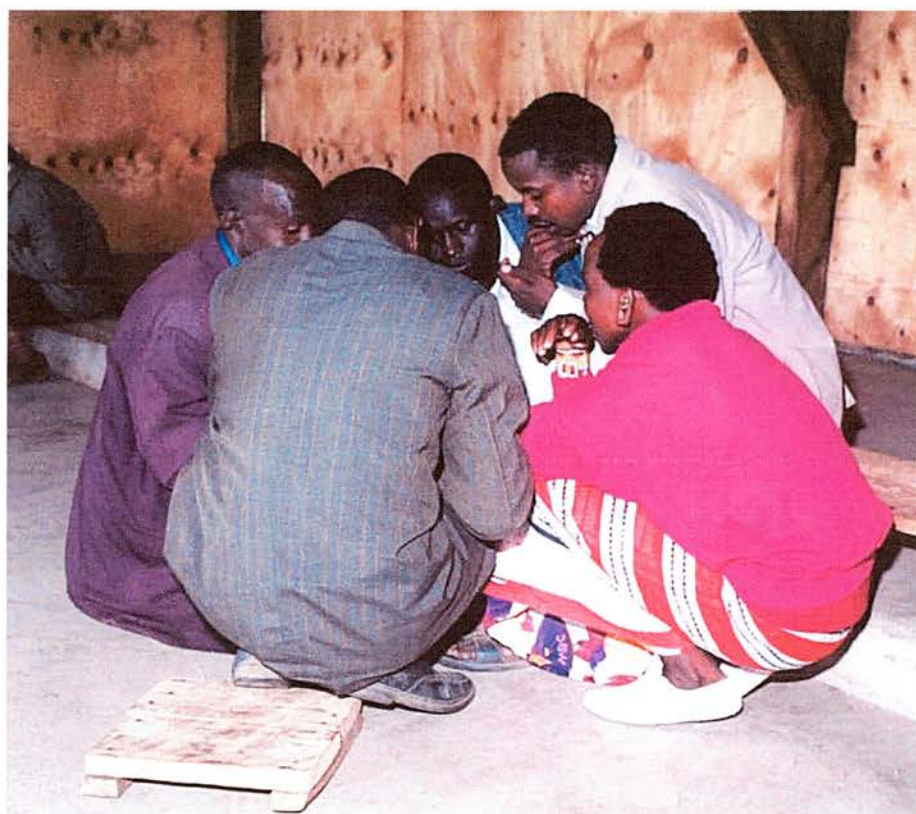


Fig. 58. Focus Group at *Camp Mwamba* (2001).

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<sup>34</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, FocusGroup1Mwamba.jpeg.

At the end of this time, all individual focus groups reassembled and a large group discussion ensued. The moderator of each group shared the answers their particular group had discussed together in regard to the questions. In turn, the entire assembly commented on the answers given in the open forum. While Western survey protocol for focus groups does not require the assembly of all focus groups to gather together for discussion, in Maasai culture it is not only preferred, but also, in fact, necessary.

The communal nature of Maasai society shows that consensus is often needed in order to apprehend and endorse ideas and plans.<sup>35</sup> The Maasai concepts of council (*olkiama*) and delegation (*oratioti*) address this issue of communal participation in decision-making as specific groups form for various purposes of leadership, influence, and societal governance.<sup>36</sup> The wisdom sayings of Maasai oral tradition also affirm community consensus. Pastor Stephen, in his opening remarks to the evangelists, affirmed the need for and value of discussion by using a proverb, “*Ore enkan̄g nemeiguena, nemeshetayiu*” (The village which is not discussed is not built).<sup>37</sup> This procedure of feedback and consensus is one that is not only popular, but also one that adds to the reliability of whatever has been discussed.

During the focus group seminar, it was most helpful for all the evangelists to hear the discussions coming out of each of the particular groups. As the evangelists commented on each other's focus group opinions, a certain sense of unanimity

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<sup>35</sup>Sankan details levels of authority in Maasai culture in his second chapter. In subsequent chapters, he reveals that many delegations and groups approach tribal leaders to be heard prior to decision-making. Sankan, *Maasai*, 8-10.

<sup>36</sup>Mol, *Maa*, 48 and 53.

<sup>37</sup>Stephen Mparinkoi, opening remarks to PCEA evangelists in focus group gathering at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

resulted that was quite evident to the research team. Pastor Stephen and I acted as moderators of the entire group discussion and reviewed the points for each question that were assented to by the group as a whole. The most pertinent of these results are highlighted in the next chapter.

In the months following the administration of the PRA survey and the convocation of the focus groups, the data was further organized and analyzed. The film from each of the particular churches was processed and the photographs scanned into digital files. Recordings of worship services and singing were digitized, work on transcription begun, and evangelist interviews organized. Subsequently, a brief summary report, including a collection of photographs, was assembled in a bound presentation format for each of the individual churches. Stephen Mparinkoi and Benson Kurraru were contacted and a follow-up visit planned for the dissemination of the reports to each church and a meeting with the evangelists for further discussion and analysis.

One year after the original survey was conducted, I returned to the mission areas for a follow-up visit. Pastor Stephen and Benson organized an evangelist seminar for the purpose of fellowship and further discussion and analysis of the previous year's case study data. Spending this additional period of time in the field work area addresses one of the chief concerns of PRA methodology critics, that of rushing the research process. During this sojourn, I traveled to each of the three distinct mission areas to visit many of the evangelists and churches in their home areas. Each of the thirty-five churches was presented a summary report and photographs from the previous year. In all cases, the reception of this report was positive and enthusiastic. While the PRA methodology does not require such an on-



site follow-up visitation, in this case, the second visit served to show the Maasai with whom we worked that research was not a solely extraction oriented activity.

In summary, evangelists from the thirty-five churches plus two newly established ones gathered together for a fellowship meeting (*enkomono*) a year after the study was conducted. Those attending this *enkomono* spent two days discussing their church's ministry and the study information. The follow-up discussions and the presentation of the smartly packaged reports were indications to local people that they were important in the process of research, learning, and decision-making. In addition, helpful ecclesiastical resources are beginning to be developed in several situations as a result of the information in this report. These visible steps of participation and partnership in the lives of Maasai people on the local level are an important measure of the success of the PRA method in this case. Academic integrity can be maintained while affirming and genuinely partnering with people of diverse cultures.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS OF THE MAASAI WORSHIP CASE STUDY IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

In order to achieve an accurate assessment of the worship practices and worship leader training among PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas, this study seeks to bring a convergence of data together forming an overall case study analysis. In this chapter, material offered includes a basic summary of the location and environment of PCEA Maasai congregations, followed by an examination of the Worship Observation Reports completed by the field observers on their visits to Maasai worship services. Next, consideration is given to the Worship Surveys administered by these same observers to ten local participants of each congregation. Finally, the chapter concludes with discoveries stemming from a focus group evaluation with PCEA Maasai evangelists. In the course of the chapter, photography from survey sites and personal interviews conducted with PCEA Maasai evangelists assist to bring clarity to points considered. Analytical commentary runs throughout the chapter pertaining to the research question: “To what extent and in what ways has the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa taken into account the distinctives of Maasai culture?”

## PCEA Maasai Outreach Areas and Their Congregations

### *Location and Environment*

The *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas are similar in many ways, but also have a number of distinct differences.<sup>1</sup> In relation to similarities, it is plainly obvious to anyone traversing these three areas that there are a substantial number of Maasai people living in each. The distinct homes and village arrangements as previously described so characteristic of both historic and contemporary Maasai culture dot the areas. One will see abundant representation of traditional Maasai dress, again plainly distinguishable by unique *ilkarash* (cloth wraps) and bead adornment, in each area with a proliferation of Maasai in regional trading centers on weekly market days. The names of stores and advertising painted on sheets of plywood often have Maasai words included to lure the area's clientele to eat or shop. The Maasai people living within the loose geographic bounds of these outreach areas are predominately from the *Keekonyokie* clan. Red is a favorite

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<sup>1</sup>See Fig. 57 on page 163 of this thesis to view "Map of PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat* and *Ewuaso* Mission Areas." The figures, statistical data, photographs, and musical recordings referenced in this entire section, unless otherwise specifically cited, are all derived from the Worship Case Study data of the thirty-five PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* areas. The photographs and basic data are deposited with the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non Western World (CSCNWW), New College, University of Edinburgh. In addition, the supplemental compact disc included with this thesis contains a substantial amount of data the contents of which are listed in Appendix 1. On the compact disc, each particular church has been assigned its own folder into which data and photographs may be found specific to that congregation. For ease of location on the compact disc, photographs used in the text are labeled in footnotes. The letter/number designation for each church is used on each photograph. Therefore, a photograph labeled *O1-YouthChoir.jpeg* refers to an image of the youth choir at *Olooseos* church. This image may be located on the compact disc in the *Olooseos* folder or by finding the actual photograph in the CSCNWW library. Where applicable, specific reports from the Worship Case Study are also identified. In these cases, a reference to the Worship Observation Report is abbreviated as WOR followed by the specific letter/number of the particular church. Therefore, WOR-O1 indicates the Worship Observation Report for the *Olooseos* church.

color in purchasing cloth and beads for beadwork, and the production of a special sour milk drink (*kule nauto*) is both an art and a means of commerce. Cattle, goats, and sheep are everywhere and weekly sales in each outreach area are a regular part of the pattern of living.

There are several noteworthy differences in these three outreach areas that have a bearing on perceptions and experiences of Christian worship and worship leader development. Considering the map in Chapter Four (Fig. 57), one can see that the congregations situated in the *Olchoronyori* outreach areas have close proximity to the trading centers of *Kiserian*, *Ngong*, and ultimately Nairobi itself. All four churches in this area are just off the main tarmac road and situated on the southeast end of the *Ngong Hills* between 7,000 and 9,000 feet in elevation. Private transportation enterprise as well as government bus service ply this road providing easy access for those living in this area to the market places and the nation's capital. In recent years, the rich land surrounding the churches of *Olchoronyori* has grown greatly in value. This fact, combined with the Maasai people's unique understanding of land ownership, has led to many valuable properties being relinquished by Maasai people who accept lucrative cash offerings. The areas around the churches in this outreach area are becoming satellite farms and homes for those, many of whom are Kikuyu, who may work in Nairobi but wish to have a farming enterprise as well. The demographic make-up of these congregations reflects the diversity of the population now inhabiting the areas around the four churches in the *Olchoronyori* outreach area.

The *Injashat* outreach area consists of a geographic section on the western side of the *Ngong Hills* on the floor of a section of the Rift Valley at 5,000 to 7,000

feet in elevation. There are no tarmac roads going into this area, although there is a fairly developed dirt road that rings the valley floor from one end of the *Ngong Hills* to the other. Unless during the heart of the rainy season, this ring road is drivable making it possible for those living in the valley to have access to the markets in both *Ngong* and *Kiserian*. Rainfall in this outreach area is significantly less than that of *Olchoronyori* making farming possible, but much more difficult. This lack of moisture, a clay soil type, and a further distance to Nairobi causes the property to have less value than *Olchoronyori*. Nevertheless, many land parcels have been sold in recent years with individual homesteads, farms, and fences increasingly encumbering the once free-grazing land of the historically nomadic Maasai who live here. There are several major development projects located within the *Injashat* area: *Olosho-oibor* (I3), and *Saikeri* (I7) being the oldest and most consistently maintained. The communities surrounding these two sites benefit from water, school, animal husbandry assistance, and health care provided by the development projects.

Step to the west beyond the *Injashat* area and the Rift Valley makes another significant dip in elevation into the *Ewuaso* outreach area situated at approximately 3,000 to 5,000 feet. The elevation of *Susua* and *Longonot* is naturally higher as both volcanic mountains rise straight up from the valley floor. In the *Ewuaso* area, rainfall is scarce and temperatures soar. Access into the area is generally very difficult and time consuming. There are weekly transports (daily only by private charter) directly from the heart of the *Ewuaso* to *Ngong* and to Nairobi. A major government water project is well maintained in *Najile* (E1) and a secondary school has been established. A developed weekly market is held at the *Osero Onyokie* (E2)

trading center, also the home of the government staffed health clinic for the region. In general, the *Ewuaso* outreach area is much less populated by peoples other than Maasai. *Ewuaso* has fewer development projects, less commerce, and is much more traditionally Maasai. With the distinct similar and different characteristics of each outreach area briefly noted, it is time to look at the specific PCEA congregations and a summary of what is now known about them because of this case study.

### Worship Observation Reports

#### *Church Attendance*

In beginning this research, it was difficult to come up with an approximation of the number of people attending PCEA Maasai churches in these mission areas. Until this study, there was also no accurate count of how many churches there were in existence. The results listed in the forthcoming table, "Worship Observation Report: Attendance in PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas" (Table 5), show the number and location of each church and the cumulative number of people gathered for worship determined on the dates of observation for the three mission areas. Referring to the data enumerated in table 5, worship attendance in the *Olchoronyori* outreach area was 369, in *Injashat* it was 645, and in *Ewuaso* it was 1,340. The three areas combined saw 2,354 persons attending PCEA worship services in these three mission outreach areas on the dates of observation. The individual church with the highest number was *Olooseos* (O1) in the *Olchoronyori* outreach area, located on the grounds of the former Maasai Rural Development Centre just off a main tarmac road, with 184 in attendance. The individual church with the lowest number was *Ereyiet oo Makesen* (E16) in the

*Ewuaso* outreach area, located off a small dirt track leading away from the trading areas toward the far-removed *Mosiro* with twelve in attendance.

The following table of attendance (Table 5) shows all thirty-five church's participation, with the overall average attendance figure was sixty-seven worshipers per church. Breaking down the attendance data into individual outreach areas yields *Olchoronyori* with an average of ninety-two worshipers per church, *Injashat* with seventy-two worshipers per church, and *Ewuaso* with sixty-one worshipers per church. It is helpful to recall that, at the time of this observation, there were four churches in the *Olchoronyori* area, nine in the *Injashat* area, and twenty-two in the *Ewuaso* area. As previously noted, the geographic position of the churches located in the *Olchoronyori* area are all in close proximity to a significant tarmac road with a concentrated surrounding population base, the churches in the *Injashat* area are a bit more removed and in a less populated region, and the churches in the *Ewuaso* outreach area are in a remote area of sparse population.

This table of attendance figures (Table 5), "Worship Observation Report: Attendance in PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas," expresses the study area in terms of concentration of worshipers. There were eight churches in the combined outreach areas with over one hundred people in attendance (O1, I3, I5, E3, E5, E6, E7, E14); one from the *Olchoronyori* area, two from the *Injashat* area, and five from the *Ewuaso* area. There were four churches in these three combined outreach areas with fewer than thirty in attendance (I9, E15, E16, E17), one being in the *Injashat* area, the other three in the *Ewuaso* area. Referring to the map (Fig. 57), one can see that these congregations with small numbers in



attendance are in difficult to reach areas, especially the ones along the sparsely populated *Mosiro* dirt track.

Table 5. Worship Observation Report: Attendance in PCEA Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas

Code	Church	Attendance
O1	Olooseos	184
O2	Imasin	45
O3	Oldanyati	90
O4	Olepolos	50
	<b>Olchoronyori total</b>	<b>369</b>
I1	<i>Naironde</i>	51
I2	<i>Ilgarooj</i>	70
I3	<i>Olosho-oibor</i>	180
I4	<i>Olasiti</i>	38
I5	<i>Kimuka</i>	175
I6	<i>Olmaroroi</i>	44
I7	<i>Saikeri</i>	42
I8	<i>Nasaru</i>	32
I9	<i>Neson Koyo</i>	13
	<b>Injashat total</b>	<b>645</b>
E1	Najile	78
E2	Osero-onyokie	62
E3	Ole Ntoko	123
E4	Olodungoro	92
E5	Enajooli	112
E6	Ekusera Keri	110
E7	Olgarua	101
E8	Oloongonot	41
E9	Olgumi	36
E10	Eluaai	36
E11	Empeut	43
E12	Ilgorooj(b)	32
E13	Inkiushin	36
E14	Soitamurt	151
E15	Sairrashie	25
E16	Ereyiet oo Makesen	12
E17	Ilkparakuo	20
E18	Olokeri	54
E19	Oldorko	65
E20	Kemelok	38
E21	Olokumukum	38
E22	Olodungoro-oibor	35
	<b>Ewuaso total</b>	<b>1340</b>
	<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>2354</b>

Another factor effecting attendance is the geographic dimensions of the mission areas. Again, the map (Fig. 57) shows the approximate extent of size these three mission areas occupy. *Olooseos* is the smallest with a cluster of four churches easily accessible from the trading centers of *Kiserian* and *Olepolos*. *Injashat* is much larger with congregations far removed from one another. *Ewuaso* is vast where traveling by foot from one end to another requires one or two overnight stops. Where population clusters are dense, congregational size is larger and, in sparsely populated areas, congregational size is smaller. The significant number of PCEA churches in the area, twenty-two at the time of the study, is partly due to the necessity of churches being situated within a maximum two hour walking distance of the villages it serves. This allows morning and evening daily routines of keeping cattle to occur with a lengthy time at worship in between.

The worship observation data reveals that the Maasai Christian worship services in all three mission areas were well attended. The instances where the numbers indicated lower attendance were from the newer church plants (I9, E16). The photographic record shows the *Neson Koyo* (I9) congregation in the process of constructing a church building with current membership consisting of one extended family.<sup>2</sup> The observer for *Ereyiet oo Makesen* (E16) wrote in his notes, “*Keti iltunganak lemeti*” (Some people were not here), indicating that there may have been a contingent of other folks who normally attend who were not present that particular day.<sup>3</sup> In debriefing, the observer stated that a number of members walked to *Ewuaso* to attend the *Soitamurt* (E14) church for a fund raising to help with the

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<sup>2</sup>I9-NesonKoyoChurchBldgWPeople.jpeg.

<sup>3</sup>WOR-E16.

construction of a church building there. The resulting attendance at Soitamurt (E14) showed 151 in attendance.

A brief explanation is in order for those churches with larger attendance figures (over 100 in attendance: O1, I3, I5, E3, E5, E6, E7, E14). Using the example in the paragraph above, the attendance number of 151 worshipers at *Soitamurt* (E14) was influenced by the participation of members from *Ereyei et oo Makesen* (E16) and other churches. The other churches in *Ewuaso* with attendance over 100 are all situated near the trading centers of *Najile* or *Osero Onyokie*. The property around these trading centers is in high demand and more densely populated than in any other place in the *Ewuaso* mission area. In addition, there is a large Maasai boarding school in *Najile*. Because of these factors, there are simply more people from which to draw for congregational participation. In the *Injashat* region, the *Kimuka* (I5) and *Olosho-oibor* (I6) congregations have been in existence over twenty years and have an established presence in the region. The written and photographic records from the observer at *Kimuka* indicate a regular worship service took place on the day of observation without special events or guests.<sup>4</sup> The situation of the *Kimuka* church is unique in that it is on the corner of the *Ngong Hills* ring road and the dirt road that leads out to *Ewuaso*. Also, the areas all around *Kimuka* are densely populated by Maasai and Kikuyu homesteaders. Photographic record and observer commentary for the day of visitation determined that the *Olosho-oibor* (I6) congregation was meeting under a tree to help in the establishment of a new church in that area.<sup>5</sup> It is likely that the special event can account for the very high

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<sup>4</sup>WOR-I5, I5-KimukaBldg.jpeg, I5-KimukaCongOutside.jpeg, I5-KimukaLeaders.jpeg.

<sup>5</sup>WOR-I3, I3-OloshooiborNCDchoir.jpeg, I3-OloshooiborNCDcong.jpeg.

attendance of 180 people. Finally, the *Olooseos* church (O1) in the *Olchoronyori* area recorded 184 in attendance. Stephen Kashonka, evangelist at *Olooseos*, stated that the church in his charge was experiencing growth:

*Olooseos* church has had a revival. It (the church) is not like it was ten years ago. There are many children in Sunday school. Our youth are happy to participate; they even have their own songs we compose ourselves, so there are many youth in the choir. We need instruments. The people, they get excited when we have a guitar.<sup>6</sup>

This high number of attendees seems to be a normal amount for that particular church given Kashonka's assessment, the church's proximity to more densely populated areas, the situation of both a day primary and boarding secondary school on the former MRDC property, and the length of establishment of the *Olooseos* congregation.

The overall attendance rates in the three outreach areas show that the PCEA churches are active in their local regions. Attendance at a service of Christian worship itself reflects the Maasai culture in the sense of expressing a core cultural value: community. Maasai, in general, tend to support communal activities by their presence and participation. This may be seen in the ceremonies and rites previously described, as well as many others.<sup>7</sup> The only prohibitions from participation are activities limited to those of certain genders, ages, or stations in life.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, any

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<sup>6</sup>Interview with Stephen Kashonka at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

<sup>7</sup>Public gatherings on ceremonial occasions reinforce Maasai cultural values. One of the largest gatherings is the *eunoto* ceremony where junior warriors are upgraded to senior warriors. For *eunoto*, a very large ceremonial *emanyatta* (village) is constructed. In another example, Mol recounts 876 women present for a four-day ceremony for women. See Mol, *Maa Dictionary*, 172-173. Also, note the rites and ceremonies described in Chapter Two of this thesis.

<sup>8</sup>Examples of exclusive participation are visitation to the warrior's village, presence at female circumcision, and attendance at certain meetings of area elders.

activity supported by the local community will have participation by those in the villages in that particular area.

When a Christian church is established in a particular area with the approval of the local Maasai elders, the way is clear for those in area villages to participate. At least two additional churches were established in the year between the field work study and the follow-up visitation conducted by the writer. Since that time, anecdotal evidence through communications with Kenyan members of the PRA leadership team indicates other congregations have been formed as well. The significant numbers of Maasai in attendance at PCEA worship services and the continued growth of new churches in these mission areas demonstrate that the cultural value of community also reflects in Maasai worship participation.

Instances of exception may be found. In the observations of the author, a typical occurrence is finding a village where elders are reticent to the idea of evangelization. In these situations, that same elder may allow the women and children of his village to meet with the Christian emissaries outside of the village itself, perhaps under shade of a nearby tree. There are other cases where a man will simply not allow his wife or wives to attend services of Christian worship. In most of these instances, the reasoning behind this prohibition is the same as those given for not allowing children to go to school: these activities are often perceived as inhibitors to continuation of the ways of the Maasai by ushering in ideas that are seen as contrary to the traditional manner of Maasai life. This point makes it especially important to sensitively consider encouraging cultural expression in Maasai Christian worship. Participation in the group of those gathered in Christian worship may then be viewed as an extension of the Maasai cultural value of

gathering together as a community, albeit, in this instance, gathering as the community of faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, when considering PCEA church attendance in the three mission outreach areas, the Maasai distinctive of community may be said to be reflected and reinforced in their worship practices.

*Church Leadership: Evangelists, Worship Leaders, Pastors*

In addition to ascertaining worship attendance, the Worship Observation Reports give indication of who was leading worship on the day of the site visit, whether the designated evangelist working at a particular church, a lay leader, or a combination. The tables in Chapter Four identifying individual churches with a letter-number and color code has the name of the evangelists for each congregation.<sup>9</sup> These assignments were made by several PCEA pastors who have worked in the area in consultation with the PCEA head office. While assignments were made for each church, only a few of the evangelists are official in the sense that they receive a PCEA stipend for their labor. At the time of the observations, there was one official Presbytery-paid evangelist for each mission area: Simon Kirrau from *Olchoronyori*, Paul Kisompol from *Injashat*, and Tomas Leposo from *Ewuaso*. These paid evangelists assisted in coordinating and encouraging the work of the designated, volunteer evangelists. Those paid were receiving KSH 1,000/ per month at the time of this study (approximately US \$16, or £10). Many of those evangelists who were considered volunteers did much the same work as those employed.

The Worship Observation Reports also sought to discover who actually led worship in the particular PCEA Maasai churches. As the reports were analyzed, it was clear that these paid and volunteer evangelists play vital roles in worship

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<sup>9</sup>See Tables 2, 3, and 4.



leadership. The organization and order of the worship service was their responsibility, the decisions of who would speak, give testimony, pray, and which groups would be given time to sing that day was also their decision. They were given respect and honor as leaders by those gathered. Finally, their names were listed as church leaders in the Worship Observation Reports and they were photographed as service leaders. Moreover, it was discovered that it was not only the evangelist who offered leadership, but also lay men and women from the individual congregation. Ordained elders and deacons, as well as mature Christian lay people, offered assistance to the evangelist in the areas of reading Scripture, offering prayers, and bringing greetings for the morning services. Prior to the service of worship, the church's evangelist worked with any others participating to outline the service of the day and have prayer. Respect of leaders is a Maasai cultural value that is visibly in place in the PCEA Maasai churches. Some of those interviewed report that they view it as both a privilege and an honor to participate in the leadership of worship in Maasai PCEA congregations.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, this high view of their role as worship leaders influences their choices of clothing for the task.

The following photographs taken by the observers at each site illustrate typical examples of the dress worn by those leading worship in Maasai PCEA congregations and the dress worn by those attending the worship services.<sup>11</sup> The first set, from *Najile* (E1) in the *Ewuaso* area, shows the worship leaders (Fig. 59) Joseph Nkuito, Sara Kalte, and Matayo Nakuto (l to r) in formal western wear. It is

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<sup>10</sup>Interviews with Stephen Kasonka, Joseph Tumanka, and Moses Matura at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

<sup>11</sup>E1-NajileLeaders.jpeg, E1-NajileCongregationIn.jpeg, E1-NajileCongregationOut.jpeg.

clear by observation of Matayo Nakuto's ears that he has progressed through the traditional passages of a Maasai man. It is highly likely that Nakuto wears his ilkarash (cloth wrap) to herd his animals during the week and for church and activities in the trading areas selects a different attire.

The photographs of the congregation at *Najile* assembled inside the tin building (Fig. 60) and upon their exit from the church after the worship service (Fig. 61) show that those attending worship are almost exclusively wearing traditional Maasai outfits. The photographic documentation provided by the Worship Observation Reports illustrates an important distinction between the western dress of PCEA leaders and the more traditional dress of those in many congregations. In *Najile* for instance, it is clearly visible in the following photographs that the worship leaders dress differently than a majority of those in the congregation.

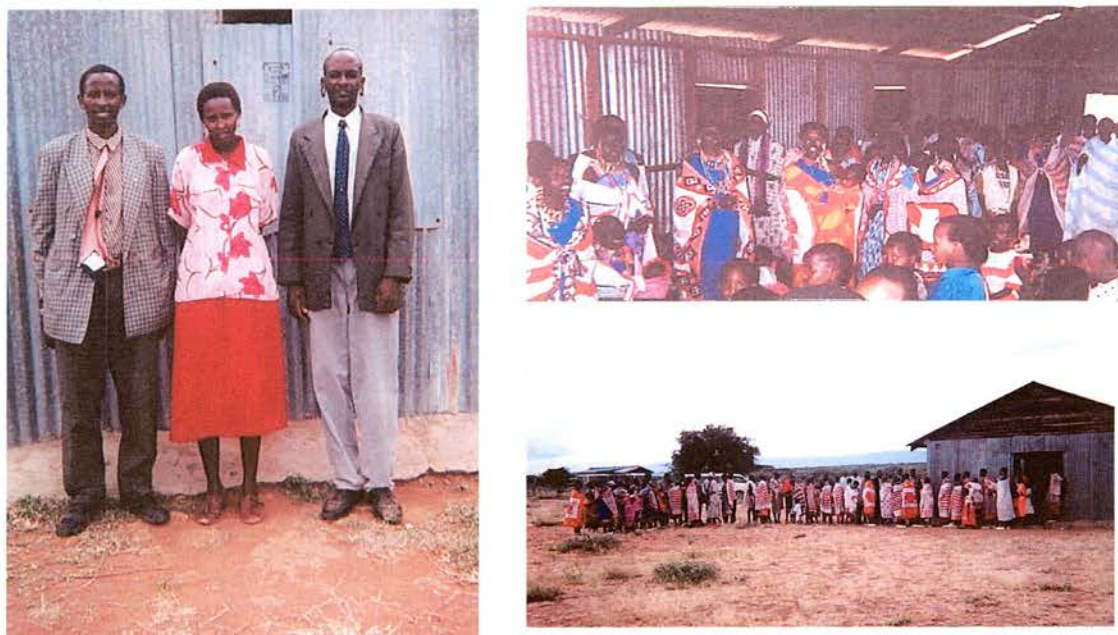


Fig. 59. *Najile* (E1) Worship Leaders. Figs. 60 (in), 61 (out) *Najile* Congregation.

In the next set of photographs from *Olooseos* (O1),<sup>12</sup> the worship leadership dress in formal western wear with the addition of head coverings for the women (Fig. 62). The *Olooseos* congregation (Fig. 63) almost exclusively wears western dress as well. This tendency towards western style clothing is partly due to the location of the congregation near the growing town of *Kiserian*, its close proximity to Nairobi, and the changing demographics of the area. In addition, *Olooseos* had served as the parish center for the *Olooseos* parish until 1999 when the three mission outreach areas were designated. As parish center prior to 1999, *Olooseos* was the site for the majority of official church meetings for the parish and hosted the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery meeting on several occasions. These official church meetings were always held with the strictest decorum, including dress. As the oldest and only

<sup>12</sup>O1-OlooseosLeaders.jpeg, O1-OlooseosCongregation.jpeg.

completed stone church building in the three outreach areas, *Olooseos* carries an air of history, dignity, and formality.



Fig. 62. *Olooseos* (O1) Worship Leaders.      Fig. 63. *Olooseos* (O1) Congregation.

After examining the photographs of the worship leaders from each of the thirty-five churches, it is plainly observed that formal western dress is worn by all the evangelists and nearly every lay leader in the churches as well. Take, for example, the following three photographs of worship leaders at their respective churches.<sup>13</sup> These representative samples were selected because they are the more geographically remote churches in each of the three outreach areas (E20, O4, I9). At the distant *Kimelok* church (E20), near *Mosiro*, these lay worship leaders wear trousers, dress shirts, sport coats, and one has a neck tie (Fig. 64). At the *Olepolos* church (O4), the lay leaders are again dressed formally (Fig. 65). It is noteworthy to consider the custom of wearing a winter jacket (Figs. 65 and 66) to worship even though it is an equatorial climate. Any kind of jacket serves to formalize a shirt and trousers. Women leaders wear skirts and blouses or dresses often with a jacket or a

<sup>13</sup>E20-KimelokLeaders.jpeg, O4-OlepolosLeaders.jpeg, I9-NesonKoyoLeaders2.jpeg.



type of shoulder wrap. Women who are members of the Women's Guild wear head coverings as seen in the Women's Guild Choir at *Soitamurt* (E14).<sup>14</sup> The lay worship leaders at the *Neson Koyo* church (I9) are all from Sambani Meyoki's family (Fig. 66). His son wears trousers and a jacket, one woman wears African traditional dress, one woman wears a western style dress, and Sambani wears his traditional Maasai clothes.<sup>15</sup> None of these three remote churches had their assigned lay evangelist present on the day of the PRA Worship Observation. While lay leaders from within the church participate regularly in worship leadership, at times, when their evangelist is absent, these leaders assume all the liturgical and preaching responsibilities for the day.



Fig. 64. *Kimelok* (E20) Lay Worship Leaders (Luka and James Kararei).

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<sup>14</sup>See Fig. 87, E14-WomensGuildChoir.jpeg.

<sup>15</sup>Later in this chapter, the issues of dress will be discussed further using information gathered from the survey instrument.



Fig. 65. *Olepolos* (O4) Lay Worship Leaders  
(Sammy Oleku, Sophia Leboi, Watson Mbirua).



Fig. 66. *Neson Koyo* (I9) Lay Worship Leaders  
(All of the Meyoki family).

The assigned evangelists, the lay evangelists, and the lay leaders from within each particular church all play important and active roles in worship leadership in these Maasai churches. Their mutual sharing of responsibilities, their participation



in decision-making with and for the congregation, and their position of respect within the church given to them by members gives evidence to this fact. The work of worship leadership in PCEA Maasai churches by the evangelists and lay leaders in each congregation is absolutely vital because there are so few PCEA clergy who work with the Maasai in these three outreach areas.

At the time of this study, there was only one active, paid, PCEA pastor working in any of these mission areas. The Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi was assigned to the *Ewuaso* outreach area. While Pastor Stephen assists with the *Injashat* and *Olchoronyori* outreach areas, his primary focus is *Ewuaso*. The proliferation of churches in the *Ewuaso* area is due to his zeal and efforts to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the establishment of churches people can easily get to and by his mentoring evangelists in this outreach area. Other than Pastor Stephen, there are a few retired PCEA ministers who continue to assist, especially in the *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* regions, as churches there are more easily accessible by vehicle. Revs. Nakeel, Waweru, and Pulei remain active, as did Rev. Rapasi prior to his death a few years ago. Revs. Nakeel and Waweru, ministers of Kikuyu ethnicity, assist primarily in the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Though Kikuyu, Nakeel and Waweru's long standing ministry in these areas has fostered respect within the Maasai community. Maasai pastor, Rev. Samuel Pulei, has a long history of working with his people through the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the Masai Rural Development Centre, and the Masai Action for Self-Improvement. Currently, Pulei spends the majority of his efforts assisting congregations on the Kenya-Tanzania boarder near Magadi.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Interview with Rev. Samuel Pulei at his *Olooseos* home, 28 May 2001.

*Written Resources Available in PCEA Maasai Churches*

During the PRA Worship Observation, which sought to canvas all thirty-five churches in the briefest period of time possible, one of the items observers were asked to note was what written resources were available for use in each church. Pastor Stephen was particularly interested in this type of discovery for several reasons. Written resources might be an indicator of literacy level in the church, they could indicate which churches had funds available with which to purchase the materials, and they might show the value an individual congregation placed on having Bibles or hymnbooks available for their worship together. This data is shown on table 6, "Worship Observation Report: Bible and Hymnbook Availability in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas."

The Worship Observation Reports returned by the observers indicate that in the *Olchoronyori* area, at the time of visitation, there were a total of 80 Bibles and 40 hymnbooks in the four churches.<sup>17</sup> In the *Injashat* outreach area, there were a total of 126 Bibles and 48 hymnbooks in those nine churches and in the *Ewuaso* area, there were a total of 177 Bibles and 60 hymnbooks counted for the twenty-two churches in that region.

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<sup>17</sup>For each of the three mission areas, it is not known whether the Bibles and hymnbooks counted in the churches are personally or communally owned. The observers were instructed only to count the total number of these items.

Table 6. Worship Observation Report: Bible and Hymnbook Availability in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas

Code	Church	# Bibles	# Hymnbooks
O1	Olooseos	24	20
O2	Imasin	28	11
O3	Oldanyati	10	7
O4	Olepolos	18	11
	<b>Olchoronyori total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>49</b>
I1	<i>Naironde</i>	13	1
I2	<i>Ilgarooj</i>	6	8
I3	<i>Olosho-oibor</i>	10	5
I4	<i>Olasiti</i>	6	7
I5	<i>Kimuka</i>	70	20
I6	<i>Olmaroroi</i>	5	0
I7	<i>Saikeri</i>	7	6
I8	<i>Nasaru</i>	7	1
I9	<i>Neson Koyo</i>	2	0
	<b>Injashat total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>48</b>
E1	Najile	9	3
E2	Osero Onyokie	14	6
E3	Ole Ntoko	20	6
E4	Olodungoro	8	1
E5	Enajooli	10	8
E6	Ekusera Keri	12	5
E7	Olgarua	9	5
E8	Oloonongot	2	0
E9	Olgumi	2	3
E10	Eluaai	4	0
E11	Empeut	10	3
E12	Ilgorooj (b)	3	0
E13	Inkiushin	4	3
E14	Soitamurt	23	7
E15	Sairrashie	8	3
E16	Ereyiet oo Makesen	3	0
E17	Ilkparakuo	4	2
E18	Olokeri	2	0
E19	Oldorko	18	2
E20	Kimelok	5	2
E21	Olokumukum	1	0
E22	Olodungoro-oibor	6	1
	<b>Ewuaso total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>60</b>
	<b>3 Area Grand Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>157</b>

It is more helpful to extrapolate this data into a portion per person ratio. In the PCEA churches in the *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* areas there is approximately one Bible for every five people and in the *Ewuaso* churches there is one Bible for every eight people attending worship. In terms of hymnbooks, *Olchoronyori* has the lowest ratios with one hymnbook for every eight people, followed by *Injashat* with one hymnbook for every thirteen people, and then *Ewuaso* with one for every twenty-two people attending worship. Considering all three outreach areas combined, there was a grand total of 383 Bibles and 157 Hymnbooks counted by the observers at the time of the site visits. Overall, these figures yield a ratio of one Bible for every six persons and one hymnbook of every fifteen persons who attend worship in the combined PCEA churches located in these three outreach areas.

The few written resources available in PCEA Maasai churches signify the low place of consideration given to the unique cultural situation of Maasai people. Whether one views the lack of Bibles, hymnbooks, and other material a matter of literacy or financial ability, the conclusion is the same. Maasai people have been considered very little in the production of written Christian resources. The one Maasai hymnbook widely available in the PCEA Maasai churches in this study is mainly a translation of the hymnody used in the initial pioneer missionary work of Scottish Presbyterians.<sup>18</sup> Other than the Bible, scripture portions, and this hymnbook, there are only a few pamphlets and small folios in the Maasai language, these mainly directed at literacy and evangelism.

Hardly any consideration has been given by the producers of PCEA liturgical resources to the distinctiveness of Maasai culture, especially considering the fact

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<sup>18</sup>*Isinkolioitin Le nkai te nkutuk ol Maasai*, (Kijabe, Kenya: AIC Press, n.d.).

that Maasai culture has a strong oral tradition.<sup>19</sup> As an oral culture, many unique qualities to Maasai people exist that are absent from PCEA Maasai Christian worship and worship resources. Maasai oral literature is a performance-based activity. Reducing Maasai congregational participation in Christian worship to slavishly reading and singing translated texts of western hymns indicates a failure to take into account the richness of Maasai cultural heritage.

In terms of scriptural resources, the complete Bible is now translated into *ol Maa* and available.<sup>20</sup> The Bible does have value as a book more so than the available hymnbook. Because of the high regard reformed teaching places on the Bible as the Word of God, it is a respected book in PCEA Maasai churches. There is a sense of pride in ownership of a Bible with it most often being carried to church functions in a specially purchased covering, a bag or a cloth wrap. In addition, those who own their own copies find them helpful in literacy training. However, as was pointed out earlier, the number of scripture portions observed in the Maasai churches studied is low.<sup>21</sup> One explanation of this small number of available scripture portions points to the many non-readers attending PCEA Maasai churches. Another reflects the financial dimension of the equation. A Maasai Bible costs

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<sup>19</sup>Fred Foy Strang, *Maasai Oral Literature* (Greenville, SC: Furman University, 1983), 16-17. See also Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Literature In Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970). The issue of orality with regard to broader issues of worship leadership and training will be taken up in the next chapter.

<sup>20</sup>The New Testament in Maasai was published by the Bible Society of Kenya, *Osotua Ng'ejuk* (Nairobi: United Bible Societies, 1983). The Old Testament was completed and subsequently published along with the New Testament as *Biblia Sinyati* (Nairobi: Bible Society of Kenya, 1991).

<sup>21</sup>See both the extrapolation of Barrett's data on pages 82-83 and the numbers of Bibles reported in the churches of this study in table 6 of this thesis.

approximately KSH 700/ and a New Testament portion costs about KSH 450/; a laborer earns approximately KSH 100/ per day. Given the trying economic conditions of the area, the low literacy rate, and the cultural distinctive of Maasai oral tradition, owning one's own copy of the Bible may take a secondary position of priority for individuals.

One of the great factors in the dissemination of Christian faith throughout the world and across countless cultures is the ability to have the Word and worship available in the vernacular of the receptor people. Having the Bible translated, available, and accessible in the Maasai language is of utmost importance to Christian expansion and effectiveness in worship as only their tongue and their customs can convey the uniquely Maasai peculiarities which communicate the Gospel in its fullness. Literacy, of course, is a factor, but those Maasai children attending school learn to read the Maasai, Swahili, and English languages in their course of study. Therefore, there are now significant numbers of Maasai young adults who can read and write their first language. By the fact of the small numbers of Bibles available in the churches of the study area and the lack of language sensitive liturgical materials, it is clear that little consideration has been given by the PCEA, local Presbytery, and mission partners to address the issue of Maasai language resources.

#### *Music, Choirs, and Instrumentation*

Whether worshiping in a church service, walking on the way to market day, or completing chores in the village, Maasai people enjoy singing. The PRA observers were asked to ascertain information in several areas in regards to music, choir, and instrumentation in the churches they visited. Did the congregation sing from the hymnbook or from memory? Was the music made up of hymns, or praise



choruses, or a combination of the two? What did the congregation do while singing? Was there a choir? How many were participating in the choir? What did the choir wear? Did the church have any instruments? If so, how were these instruments used? This sub-section presents a summary of the actual worship music practice in PCEA churches in these three outreach areas and offers commentary on the distinct results. The following table 7, “Music, Choir, and Instrumentation in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas,” shows the data recorded for each particular church concerning musical issues.

Code	Church	Choir?	# in Choir	Uniform?	Choir Language	Choir Actions	Hymns/Chorus	Song Language	Instruments
O1	Olooseos	Yes	10	No	S	Sw	H	S	D
O2	Imasin	Yes	7	No	S,E	Sw	H	S,K,M	D, Sh, T
O3	Oldanyati	Yes	10	No	M,S	C, Sw	H,CH	M,S	D,Ky
O4	Olepolos	Yes	9	No	M,S	C,D,J,Sw	H	M	D,Ky
I1	Naironde	Yes	12	No	M	C,D,J,Sw	H,CH	M	D,Ky,Sh
I2	Ilgarooj	Yes	11/14Ch	No	M	C,Sw	CH	M	D,Ky,Sh
I3	Olosho-oibor	Yes	24	No	M,S	C,D,J,Sw	H,CH	M,S	none
I4	Olasiti	Yes	10	No	M,S	Sw	H,CH	M	D,Mn
I5	Kimuka	Yes	24	No	M,S	C,Sw	H,CH	M,S	D, bells
I6	Olmaroroi	Yes	12	No	M,S	C,D,J,	CH	M	none
I7	Sakeri	Yes	9	No	M	J,C	CH	M,S,K	D,Sh
I8	Nasaru	Yes	7	No	M	J,C	CH	M	G
I9	Neson Koyo	Yes	10	No	M	C	CH	M	none
E1	Najile	Yes	12/36Ch	No/No	M/M,S	C,D,Sw,N	CH	M	none
E2	Osero Onyokie	Yes	8/9Y/12Ch	N/N/N	M,S/S/S	C,Sw	H	M	D
E3	Ole Ntoko	Yes	16/38Ch	U/Shuka	M,S/M,S	C,J,Sw,N	H	M	D,Ky
E4	Olodungoro	Yes	7	No	M	C,D,Sw,N	H	M	D,Mn
E5	Enajooli	Yes	9	U	M,S	C,Sw	H,CH	M	D
E6	Ekusera Keri	Yes	17	U	M	C,Sw,N	CH	M	none
E7	Olgarua	Yes	15	No	M	C,D,J,Sw	CH	M	D,Ky,Sh
E8	Oloongonot	Yes	n/a	No	M	C,D,J,Sw	CH	M,S	D
E9	Olgumi	Yes	3	No	M	C,D,J,Sw,N	H,CH	M	D, jingles
E10	Eluiai	Yes	10	No	M	C, J	CH	M	D, tinglingil
E11	Empeut	Yes	7	No	M	Sw,N	H,CH	M	none
E12	Ilgarooj(b)	Yes	5	No	M	C, J	CH	M	none
E13	Inkiushin	Yes	9	No	M	C, J	CH	M	none
E14	Soitamurt	Yes	10	No	M	C,D,Sw	H,CH	M	D,Ky,T
E15	Sairrashie	Yes	6	No	M	C,Sw,N	H,CH	M	none
E16	Ereyjet oo Makesen	Yes	6	No	M	C	CH	M	none
E17	Ilkparakuo	Yes	3	No	M	C,N	CH	M	none
E18	Olokeri	Yes	5	No	M	C,Sw,N	CH	M	D
E19	Oldorko	Yes	22	No	S	C, J	CH	M,S	D
E20	Kemelok	Yes	12	No	M,S	C,D	CH	M	none
E21	Olokumukum	Yes	9	No	M	C,Sw,J	CH	M	D
E22	Olodungoro-oibor	Yes	8	No	M	C, J	CH	M	none

**CODES:** Y=Youth Choir, Ch=Children's Choir, U=Uniform, S=Swahili, K=Kikuyu, M=Maasai, H=Hymns, CH=Choruses, Sw=Swaying,

C=Clapping, J=Jumping, D=Dancing, N=Neck Movements, D=Drum, Ky=Kayamba, T=Tamborine, Sh=Shaker, G=Guitar, Mn=Manyanga

Table 7. Music, Choir, and Instrumentation in PCEA Maasai Churches in the Olchoronyori, Injashat, and Ewuaso Areas

In all thirty-five PCEA churches observed, music played a significant part in the overall worship dynamic. Without exception, each and every church participated in corporate singing. One query for the observers was to determine whether a church utilized hymnbook singing, praise choruses, or a combination of both in their times of congregational song. The data returned revealed that six of the thirty-five churches utilized hymnbook songs only in their singing; ten churches sang both hymnbook songs and praise choruses; nineteen churches sang praise choruses only. This trend toward singing choruses rather than hymns is a fairly new development in PCEA churches in this region.

In 1988-89, when the writer lived in the village of *Olosho-oibor* working with the PCEA churches in these regions, it was observed that the corporate worship songs in the churches existent at that time were almost exclusively from the hymnbook. Hymnbooks were used or the lyrics memorized. At that time, there were very few praise choruses sung by the choirs. This movement towards singing choruses has occurred as young people have begun to write their own lyrics and music and then share them among other congregations. The Maasai word used to describe this new genre of choruses or praise songs is *indungetta*. In many instances, musical forms from the indigenous Maasai culture are employed as a basis for these new melodies. A pattern for these songs may be an easily remembered chorus with slight variations sung by the congregation and choir, while the worship leader sings out the verse as a solo or in a lining-out fashion for everyone else to sing back. Maasai worshippers in PCEA churches seem to readily identify with these songs because the musical forms are familiar, the bodily movements accompanying the various tunes are already prescribed, and there seems to be a

confidence in singing melodies that are familiar. This trend helps explain the few number of hymnbooks observed in the churches as reported in the previous section and implies their relative unimportance in light of culturally sensitive music learned in the manner of the oral tradition.

All thirty-five churches had a choir and many had more than one. There were three churches in the study having formal choir uniforms with the remaining churches wearing a mixture of traditional Maasai and western dress. The choirs ranged in size from a low of three members (*Olgumi*, E9) to a high of thirty-eight (*Ole Ntoko*, E3). The seven older churches, those established for fifteen or more years in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* areas, had well-established choirs as illustrated in the following table (Table 8). Because of their long established ministry in light of the many newer PCEA churches in the mission areas, these older congregations have well developed music programs that involve several groups within their churches. On the day of observation, the *Olooseos* (O1) church had a small number participate in the choir. Upon inquiry with the observer, it was discovered that several different groups actually sang at the service, but only the official church choir was counted in the worship observation response. Photographs, however, were made of several of these groups, which interestingly the observer called, "brigades."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>WOR-O1. The term "brigades," noted by the observer, was one used in the early days of the Kikuyu Mission Station as they formed Christian organizations for young people. The brigades were organized in a loose military fashion with uniforms and a ranking system. The continued use of this term during these 2001 observations strengthens the case for the continued influence of early Scottish Presbyterian formal worship and organization practices. See also *Olooseos* (O1) photographs: O1-ChildrensChoir.jpeg, O1-YouthChoir.jpeg, O1-WomensGuild.jpeg.

On further investigation, it was reported that each of these older Maasai churches had both children's and youth choirs although the number of participants was not precisely known. In table 8, the notation 'yes/unknown' relates to this fact while the parenthetical notation 'number in photograph' indicates that the observer did not list a number in their report, but photographed that particular choir which was then counted. In fact, in most of the Maasai churches, there are multiple choirs that serve on various days of worship. It is not uncommon for a church to have the regular adult choir, a Sunday school choir for younger children, a youth choir for teens, and a choir made up of the members of the PCEA Women's Guild. On special occasions, all the church's choirs would be asked to participate, each singing several songs in a worship service.

Table 8. Choir Participation in Older PCEA Maasai Churches  
in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas

CHURCH	ADULT CHOIR	CHILDREN'S CHOIR	YOUTH CHOIR	TOTAL CHOIR MEMEBERS
<i>Ilgarooj</i> (I2)	11	14	Yes/Unknown	25
<i>Olosho-oibor</i> (I3)	24	Yes/Unknown	Yes/Unknown	24
<i>Kimuka</i> (I5)	24	Yes/Unknown	Yes/8 (number in photograph)	32
<i>Najile</i> (E1)	12	36	Yes/Unknown	48
<i>Osero Onyokie</i> (E2)	8	12	9	29
<i>Ole Ntoko</i> (E3)	16	38	Yes/Unknown	54
<i>Olooseos</i> (O1)	10	Yes/24 (number in photograph)	Yes/11 (number in photograph)	45

Through the information gathered in the Worship Observation Reports, the church choirs express varying amounts of enthusiasm and physical expression in worship. The reports bear out the fact that those churches having choirs who participate with energy and enthusiasm have congregations that respond in a similar manner. There were only five congregations where the choirs are reported to merely clap or sway. In the other thirty instances, observers noted the choir not only swaying and clapping, but also, in various degrees, dancing, jumping, and moving their necks in a manner that is typically part of Maasai traditional expressive movement.

Assisting many choirs and the congregations in their expression of worship were rhythmic instruments. The observers noted specific instruments found to be common to many churches. The skin drum is the most common instrument in use in the churches in this study with twenty-one churches using its beat to assist in worship singing. There were five with shakers, seven with *kayambas*, and two with tambourines.<sup>23</sup> One church (I8) had a guitar, one church (I5) used the small bells common to traditional Maasai music, and one church (E10) used a *tingilingil*, a metal hoop that is rhythmically struck (Fig. 67). Several churches possessed more than one instrument. In all, twenty-two of the churches in this study utilized some kind of musical instrument in their worship (63%). There were thirteen churches not having any kind of instrument (37%). It would be incorrect to assume that because

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<sup>23</sup> A *kayamba* (pictured in Figs. 69 and 72) is a rhythmic instrument constructed by lashing small lengths of thin bamboo tightly together around a wooden frame. Within the space created by the frame and surrounding bamboo, small rocks, beans or maize are inserted. When the *kayamba* is used it produces a shaker-type sound. In addition, a skilled player may tap a counter-rhythm with the thumbs on wooden strip along the top the instrument. The *kayamba* is not an indigenous Maasai instrument, but one that has become an accepted part of current Christian musical forms in PCEA Maasai churches.



these thirteen churches had no instruments that their worship in some way was diminished. In fact, in eleven of these thirteen, the choirs were noted by the observers to be very active in their physical participation through expressions such as swaying, clapping, jumping, and dancing. Even without instruments, Maasai people are able to produce powerful rhythmic sounds in their singing, treble tones with the metallic jingles of their bangles, and percussive qualities with the falling of the women's layers of leather beadwork necklaces. The following page of photographs from the observations illustrates instruments currently in use in the three mission areas.<sup>24</sup>

In both the worship observation reports and the focus group discussions with the evangelists, the use of traditional instruments seem to be an important part of the worship life of many Maasai churches in this study. The availability and use in Christian worship of such instruments signifies a connection with the traditional cultural values of the Maasai people. In the musical recordings of worship singing found on the accompanying compact disc, one may clearly hear a different amount of congregational and choir participation and enthusiasm when comparing a song from translated western hymnody and a new praise song that incorporates the use of traditional instrumentation and familiar melodic forms.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>E10-Instruments.jpeg, O1-Drums.jpeg, I2-Instruments.jpeg, I8-GuitarJohnMatura.jpeg, I7-Drum.jpeg, O4-Instruments.jpeg.

<sup>25</sup>Especially note the files iyieseremoltualai.wav and aisupatnaleng.wav which are both *indungetta* (choruses or praise songs) and compare these to Maasaihymn.wav (from the hymnbook). Even though in hymns a skin drum may be heard, it is only utilized as a device to keep time as opposed to an accompaniment. See Anderson, *Church in East Africa*, 180. See Appendix 7 regarding the supplemental compact disc.



Fig. 67. Drum and *Tingilingil* at *Eluaai* (E10).

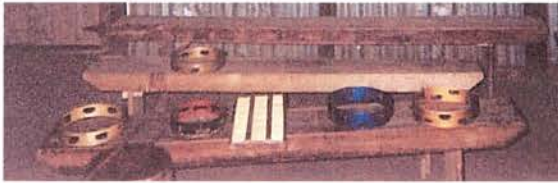


Fig. 69. Tambourines and *Kayamba* at *Ilgarooj* (I2).



Fig. 71. Drum at *Saikeri* (I7).



Fig. 68. Drums at *Olooseos*.



Fig. 70. Guitar at *Nasaru* (I8).

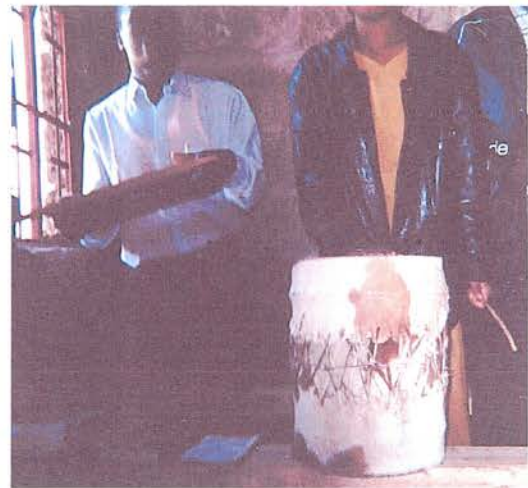


Fig. 72. *Kayamba* and Drum, *Olepolos* (O4).

When considering the thirty-five congregations as a whole, the predominate language in which these congregations and choirs sing is *ol Maa*. In congregational singing of hymns and choruses, twenty-seven churches (77%) utilized *ol Maa* exclusively with seven other churches using the Maasai language and Swahili or Kikuyu languages. There was only one church that used Swahili alone in corporate singing, *Olooseos* (O1). This fact further illustrates the change in demographics that has occurred in the *Olchoronyori* area. In choir offerings, twenty-one churches heard choirs singing only in *ol Maa* (60%), twelve heard choir selections in both the Maasai and Swahili languages (34%), and two choirs sang only in the Swahili language (6%), *Oloosesos* (O1) and *Oldorko* (E19).

Whether in church or in the village, Maasai people love to sing. The prolific number of choirs found in the churches surveyed asserts this cultural value. Every church in this study had at least one choir and many had several more. The Worship Observation Reports indicate that the more active and enthusiastic the choir, the more energetic the participation by those attending the worship service. Although the choirs utilized many hymns, it was also made clear in the study that a new form of Maasai church music was emerging. As noted, these new songs, called *indungetta* (choruses or praise songs), seem to be utilized in most of the churches studied. The *indungetta* more adequately reflect the traditional style and manner in which Maasai people experience music in their day-to-day lives.

One factor that tends to undermine cultural sensitivity in the area of worship music is the dress that many Maasai choirs seem to be adopting. While the worship observers did not all note the dress of the choirs, upon examination of the photographic evidence these same observers turned in with their written reports,

members at some of the Maasai churches studied have adopted a uniform for their choirs. In some instances, these uniforms were patterned after western choir robes, in other instances, the uniform was a shirt, tie, and trousers for the men and similar dresses for the women, or in others, it was simply the wearing of western style clothes. The influence of Presbyterian formal dress conventions, as mentioned earlier, and current church traditions from Nairobi and other regions of the world, are clearly at play in forming the perceptions of these choirs with regard to dress for Christian worship singing. In the remotest areas of East Africa, home of many PCEA Maasai congregations, these conventions would not otherwise be considered.

While the photographs of many choirs showed members in traditional dress, many depicted a distinct outfit. The trend towards putting the choir in a western-styled uniform or outfit does not consider the rich distinctive of dress in Maasai culture. Of particular interest, the children in western dress, but traditionally swaying, the photographs made by the observers of the *Olooseos* (O1) children's choir dressed in red checked robes, the *Osero-Onoykie* (E2) children's choir in western formal attire, and the adult choirs at *Olentoko* (E3) and *Olosho-oibor* (I3) all exemplify these trends.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, ChildrenSwayingEwuaso.jpeg, O1-ChildrensChoir.jpeg, E2-ChildrensChoir.jpeg, E3-AdultChoirWUniforms.jpeg, I3-Choir.jpeg.





Fig. 73. Children Swaying at *Ewuaso* New Church Plot Dedication (2002).



Fig. 74. *Olooseos* (O1) Children's Choir in Robes.



Fig. 75. *Osero-onyokie* (E2) Children's Choir.



Fig. 76. *Olentoko* (E3) Choir in Robes.





Fig. 77. *Olosho-oibor* (I3) Choir in Robes.

Missiologist Charles Kraft's comments are particularly insightful:

A church in Africa or Asia that is merely a 'literal' rendering of an American church in the twentieth century (or even a Greco-Roman church in the first century) should be rejected. Such a church slavishly copies the foreign church that founded it. If the founding church has bishops or presbyters or elders, the younger church will have them too. If the founding church operates according to a written constitution, the younger will as well. If the founding church conducts business meetings according to Roberts' Rules of Order, the younger church will likewise. And so it will be with regard to educational requirements for leadership, times of worship, style of worship, type of music, structures of church buildings, behavioral requirements, the types of education, medical and benevolent activity, and even the expression of missionary concern. This approach risks utterly disregarding the culturally appropriate functional equivalents and the indigenously understood meanings of all these things in the culture in which the young church is supposedly functioning and to which it is supposedly witnessing. The impression such churches give to the people of their cultural world is one of foreignness and outside domination, even though the leadership of these churches may be local.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Charles Kraft, 'The Church in Culture: A Dynamic Equivalence Model' in *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, edited by John Stott and Robert Coote (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 223-224.

Kraft goes on to write of his desire to see a “dynamic equivalence” church, one that looks to the unique heritage and specific needs of a culture in shaping its identity within the global Christian body.<sup>28</sup> While the influences of other cultures is evident in these photographs, it is also probable that Maasai choir members purchased these items with their own money or a church as a whole willingly engaged in fund-raising efforts to secure them. The decisions to have choir uniforms, purchase instruments, or add on to an existing church structure are made by the local congregation. As has been shown, there are clearly influences, but as far as can be ascertained, there seems to be no prescribed ecclesiastical dictates regulating these practices.

#### *Elements of and Participation in Maasai Worship*

Each of the thirty-five churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas was observed during a regular Sunday worship service by a paid research assistant who had received instruction in completing the Worship Observation Report and in surveying congregants. Of the thirty-five churches observed, thirty-five of the Worship Observation Reports were completed and returned, as well as thirty-five sets of completed surveys and cameras with the prescribed photographs taken. The basic data regarding each church is located in table 9, “Elements of and Participation in Worship in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas.” In this section, consideration is given to the meeting places of these thirty-five congregations, the length of their worship service times, the ethnic groups present in each church, the group with the most numerical representation in each church, the language used by the worship leader

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<sup>28</sup>Kraft, *Church in Culture*, 224.

during services, the responses of members of the congregation to the choir's musical offerings as well as to the prayers and preaching aspects of the services, and finally, the manner in which worship concluded in the churches visited. These matters are recounted in order to help ascertain the degree of consideration given to Maasai cultural uniqueness in the worship of the thirty-five PCEA churches in the study.

Code	Church Name	Meeting Place	Service Length	Tribal Groups	Group w/ Most #	WshpLdr Language	Response To Choir	To Pray/Preach	End of Worship
O1	Olooseos	St, C	2:10	K, M, W	K	S	0	A	G, gt
O2	Imasin	Mb, C	3:15	K, M	K	S	0	A, V	G, gt
O3	Oldanyati	Mb	2:50	K, M	M	S, M	3	A, V	G, C
O4	Olepolos	St, I	2:23	K, M, L, Ki	M	S, M	3	In	G, C
I1	Naironde	Mb	3:00	M, K	M	S, M	3	blank	G, C
I2	Ilgarooj	Mb, C	2:15	M, K	M	M	3	A, V	G, C
I3	Olosho-oibor	Mb, C	3:00	M, K	M	S, M	3	A	G, gt
I4	Olasiti	Mb	2:00	M, K	M	M	3	A	Sg, C
I5	Kimuka	Mb, C	2:55	M, K	M	S, M	3	A, V, Mv	G, C
I6	Olmaroroi	Mb	4:00	M	M	M	3	A, V, Mv	G, C
I7	Saikeri	Mb, C	2:15	M, K	M	S, M	3	A	P*, C
I8	Nasaru	Mb	3:15	M	M	M	3	A, V	P*, C
I9	Neson Koyo	Mb, I	2:35	M	M	M	3	A	P*, C
E1	Najile	Mb, C	2:18	M	M	M	3	A, V	G
E2	Osero-onyokie	Mb, C	2:10	M, K (1)	M	M	1	In	G, gt
E3	Ole Ntoko	Mb	2:10	M	M	M	3	A	G, C
E4	Olodungoro	Mb, C	2:35	M	M	M	3	A	G, gt
E5	Enajooli	Mb	2:30	M	M	M	2	A, V	G, gt
E6	Ekusera Keri	Mb, C	2:50	M	M	M	3	A	P*, C
E7	Olgarua	Mb, C	2:50	M	M	M	3	A	G, C
E8	Oloongonot	T	2:15	M, K (2)	M	S, M	3	A	G, gt
E9	Olgumi	Mb, C	2:15	M	M	M	3	A	G, C
E10	Eluaai	T	2:57	M	M	M	3	A	P*, gt
E11	Empeut	T	3:55	M, K (1)	M	M	2	A, V	G, C
E12	Ilgarooj(b)	T	2:45	M	M	M	3	A	gt
E13	Inkiushin	T	2:49	M	M	M	3	A, V, Mv	G, C
E14	Soitamurt	T	4:30	M	M	M	3	A	P*
E15	Sairrashie	Mb, C	2:10	M	M	M	3	A, V	G, gt
E16	Ereyiet oo Makesen	Mb, C	1:50	M	M	M	1	A, V, Mv	G, gt
E17	Ilkparakuo	T	2:30	M	M	M	0	In	Sg, C
E18	Olokeri	Mb, I	1:51	M	M	M	2	A	P*, gt
E19	Oldorko	Mb, I	2:25	M, K	M	S, M	2	A, V	P*, C
E20	Kemelok	T	2:30	M	M	M	3	A	G, gt
E21	Olokumukum	Mb	3:20	M	M	M	3	A	Sg, gt
E22	Olodungoro-oibor	T	2:45	M	M	M	3	A	Sg, gt

**St**=Stone, **Mb**=Mbati (tin), **I**=Incomplete, **C**=Cement Floor, **T**=Outside Under Tree, **S**=Swahili, **K**=Kikuyu, **M**=Maasai/Maa, **W**=Anglo Westerner, **L**=Luo, **Ks**=Kisi, **0**=No observable expression, **1**=Facial approval, **2**=Facial & vocal approval, **3**=Very enthusiastic approval (singing, clapping, dancing), **A**=Attentive, **In**=Inattentive **V**=Vocal response, **Mv**=Physical movement response, **G**=Grace, **C**=Circle Greeting, **gt**=Outside Greeting, **P\***=Prayer (grace), **Sg**=Song,

Table 9. Elements of and Participation in Worship in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas

### *Meeting Places for Worship*

The churches of the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas hold their worship meetings in basically three different venues: stone constructed buildings, *mabati* (tin) covered timber frame buildings, and outside, usually under the shade of a tree. In these combined regions, there was one completed stone church (*Olooseos*, O1) and one stone church which was incomplete (*Olepolos*, O4) (6%). There were twenty-four *mabati* church buildings (68%), of which thirteen had cement floors and eleven had dirt floors. There were nine congregations meeting outside and under trees (26%). It is significant to note that the two stone churches, although one is yet to be completed, are both in the *Olchoronyori* area. In addition, the *Olosho-oibor* church and the *Kimuka* church have held fund-raising drives for the construction of stone churches to replace their tin ones, but these building projects have not yet begun. In the *Injashat* area, all the congregations have *mabati* buildings in which to worship with only one of these being incomplete (*Neson Koyo*, I9). The *Ewuaso* area has the most number of established congregations, twenty-two at the time of the appraisals. In this area there are thirteen *mabati* church buildings, eight of which have cement floors and two of which, *Olokeri* (E18) and *Oldorko* (E19), are yet to be completed. The *Ewuaso* area also has nine congregations currently without buildings in which to hold services. These congregations usually gather around a few benches set up under the shade of a tree to have their worship services. The photograph that follows (Fig. 78) is typical of this kind of church establishment in the remoter regions where Maasai people live.<sup>29</sup> Once the congregation has been well established and the evangelist and area pastor

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<sup>29</sup>E10-UnderTree1.jpeg.



concur, a plot of land is procured and funds are raised to construct a simple, wood frame, tin covered building for the congregation. In the *Ewuaso* outreach area, 41% of the churches meet outdoors. Considering the combined three mission area regions, all the congregations without church structures are located in *Ewuaso*.



Fig. 78. Worship Under a Tree at *Eluai* (E10).

The length of time each service of worship lasted varied with the shortest being one hour and fifty minutes (*Ereyiet oo Makesen*, E16) and the longest being four hours and thirty minutes (*Soitamurt*, E14). Both the shortest and the longest services were held in the *Ewuaso* outreach area. On average, there was only slight variation in the length of service times between the outreach areas. The average time for a worship service in the *Olchoronyori* area was two hours and forty minutes, in the *Injashat* area the average length was two hours and forty-nine minutes, and, in the *Ewuaso* area, the services averaged two hours and thirty-eight minutes. Considering the total thirty-five churches in the study areas, worship

length averaged two hours and forty-one minutes. While it appears typical for worship length to far exceed what is typical for worship services in the west, some of the more lengthy African services were even criticized by those observing them. James Mankura, the observer at *Olmaroroi's* (I6) four hour worship service, noted that one area of his concern was "teaching leaders how to keep time."

At St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Nairobi, service leaders keep a timely schedule with worship lasting roughly one hour unless there is a special service or event occurring at worship. In Maasai areas, it is not uncommon for congregants to walk two hours or more for Sunday worship services. Because of this, most Maasai enjoy a lengthier worship service with several music offerings, prayers, and preaching by at least one, sometimes several speakers. In this fashion, morning chores can be accomplished followed by a lengthy walk, a respite for worship, and finally, return to the village for evening duties. This prevailing unrushed attitude at worship reinforces the core Maasai value of community.

### *Ethnic Groups and Language Use*

One of the facts uncovered by the PRA observations was the representation of different people groups in these outreach area services, the groups having the most representation in each particular church, and the language(s) used in communication by the worship leader. This cumulative data may be viewed in previous table 9, "Elements of and Participation in Worship in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas." The observers were asked to visually note the various people present and also to note which people had the most number in attendance. In addition, they were asked to indicate which language(s) the leader of the worship used in conducting the service. Within the

cumulative thirty-five congregations in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* mission areas, there were Kikuyu, Maasai, Kisi, Luo, and non-Africans present in the worship services.<sup>30</sup> It was noted by the observer at *Olooseos* (O1) that a small group of western medical workers were present in worship as they were assisting in the AISRED clinic that week. In fourteen of the thirty-five churches (40%), there was a mix of peoples gathered for worship. However, in three of these fourteen churches, there were only one or two people other than Maasai in the service. In twenty-one of the thirty-five churches (60%), there were Maasai people only present in worship. When considering the people with the most number present in worship, it is clear, the PCEA congregational make-up in the outreach areas observed in this study remains heavily polarized toward Maasai people. Of the thirty-five churches, thirty-three (94%) were noted to have mostly Maasai people attending, while only two (6%) indicated mostly Kikuyu (O1, O2). It is not at all surprising, giving the changing demographics of the *Olooseos* area, that the two churches with predominately Kikuyu people participating in worship were *Olooseos* (O1) and *Imasin* (O2), both in the *Injashat* outreach area.

In terms of language usage, there were two (6%) congregations using exclusively Swahili, again *Olooseos* (O1) and *Imasin* (O2); there were eight (23%) congregations using both Swahili and Maasai, and there were twenty-five (71%) congregations using exclusively the Maasai language. When considering the pattern of which particular churches had what people attending worship and the specific

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<sup>30</sup>Often, East and Southern Africans use the word "European" for peoples from America, Canada, Australia, and the European nations. The Swahili word *wazungu* (pl: white men) is often used. Maasai also use *ilashumpa* (pl: white men) or *ilooibor* (pl: the ones who are white). See: Mol. *Maa Dictionary*, 63.

languages used in the leading of worship, there emerges a trend toward a blending of people groups in the *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* outreach areas, while the *Ewuaso* outreach area remains predominately Maasai in both attendance and language usage.

### *Congregational Participation in Worship*

The PRA Worship Observation Report also sought to ascertain whether or not those worshipping in the churches of these three outreach areas were engaged in active participation and attentive listening during services. This data may be viewed again in table 9, "Elements of and Participation in Worship in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas," under the columns "Response to Choir" and "To Pray/Preach." One indicator of active participation was the congregation's perceived response to the choir's leadership in congregational singing. Observers were asked to rate the overall response of the worshipers using a four-point scale. A response of "0" indicated that there was no observable response of the congregation to the singing, the response of "1" indicated the facial approval by those participating in the worship service, a response of "2" indicated both the facial and vocal approval of the congregation, and a response of "3" indicated very enthusiastic response including facial and vocal response, as well as singing, clapping, and dancing. A response of "0," "no observable response," and "1," "facial approval only," were not deemed satisfactory to justify characterizations of active participation. Whereas a responses of "2," "facial and vocal approval," and "3," "very enthusiastic approval, including singing, clapping, and dancing" were indicators of active participation. Of the thirty-five churches surveyed, twenty-six (74%) indicated very enthusiastic responses of the

congregations to the music of the choirs. Four churches (11%) were observed participating with facial and vocal responses, two churches (6%) were reported to respond with facial approval only, and three churches (9%) were recorded as having no observable expression as the choir led in song. In this particular question, active participation was indicated if the congregation had not only facial expressions of approval, but also additional physical response. Combining the churches with responses of “2” (11%) and “3” (74%) to this question results in a sum of 85% displaying active participation. Overall, the worship observations indicated that there was a very significant propensity toward active participation on the part of the congregants to the music and singing of the choirs.

In responding to the preaching and prayer portion of the worship liturgy, participants were less demonstrative, but nevertheless generally actively listening. In this question on the worship survey, observers were asked to write down what they saw during these portions of the service. When the data was collected, the responses were coded as indicated on data table 9, “Elements of and Participation in Worship in PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas,” under the column “To Prayer/Preach.” Observers from eighteen (51%) of the churches felt that the congregations they observed were paying attention and active in their listening to the sermon and participation the prayers. In an additional thirteen churches (37%), observers not only stated attentiveness, but also added descriptions of action categorized as vocal responses and physical movement. There were three congregations (9%) labeled as inattentive by their observers, while one observer (11) did not write a response. Considering that basic attentiveness at a service of Christian worship is an indicator of interest, one can combine the figures



above for attention (51%) and attention plus action (37%) to arrive at an 88% figure for a rate of straightforward attentiveness to the preaching and prayers at worship services monitored. Again, the overall worship observations indicated that there was a very significant propensity toward active participation on the part of the congregants to the preaching and prayers delivered during the observed services of Christian worship.

### *Concluding Acts of Worship*

Finally, the observers were asked to note how worship was concluded at each of their assigned churches. Responses from this open-ended question were coded and are presented on previous table 9 under the column, "End of Worship." Upon first glance at the data table, it would appear that there are various manners in which PCEA worship in these three mission areas concludes. When the observers had their individual debriefing time upon turning in their PRA materials, a team went over their packets and clarified responses. While each congregation may have certain local customs, a substantial majority of PCEA churches have a common departure. In the cases of churches coded I7, I8, I9, E6, E10, E14, E18, and E19, the observers for these sites indicated the service concluded with a prayer. Each was asked, "What kind of prayer was said?" In all cases, their response was, "*emunyani*" (the grace). On the data table, the observer's survey indication of "prayer" is noted as "P," but marked with an asterisk to indicate the specific prayer of *emunyani*.

The practice most common to these churches is the saying of the *emunyani* prayer at the conclusion of worship. The meaning of the Maasai word *emunyani* is approximately equivalent to the word grace. When Maasai Christians in the PCEA refer to the *emunyani*, they are referring to a specific prayer of benediction. This

prayer, originally taken from the Apostle Paul, made its way into the liturgies of the Church of Scotland and, subsequently, to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, and then to the Maasai congregations in the study area.<sup>31</sup> It seems its simple words resound in Christian worship across the world, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” The Maasai say, *Emunyani Olaitoriani lang Jesu Kristo, o enyorrata Enkai papa, o enchula Oltau Sinyati metaa tenebo iyook taata ontarasi*. *Emunyani*, being the first noun in the blessing, therefore refers to this entire benediction.

The other practices common to most of these churches are the greeting of each congregant and the formation of a circle outside the church building at the conclusion of worship. According to the Worship Observations Reports, fifteen churches were observed greeting one another after worship plus eighteen churches gathered after worship in a large circle outside the building. It was evident that many observers noted more than one concluding act of worship for the congregations they observed. For instance, *Olooseos* (O1) church was observed saying “the grace” (G) and greeting one another (gt).<sup>32</sup> Four congregations included the singing of a song in their concluding act of worship. Utilizing the photographs taken by the observers, it is discovered that nine additional churches listing “the grace” (G) or greeting one another (gt) also formed a circle (E1, E2, E4, E5, E14, E16, E18, E21, E22). Combining figures from the Worship Observation Reports and the research photographs result in the noteworthy occurrence of twenty-seven churches (77%) forming a circle at the conclusion of worship activities.

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<sup>31</sup>The apostolic benediction is found in 2 Corinthians 13:14.

<sup>32</sup>See Table 9.

Considering the *emunyani* benediction first, the worship observations discovered that a vast majority of the churches in the three mission areas utilized this benediction at the end of their services. Of the thirty-five churches observed, thirty congregations say “the grace” (86%, “G” and P\* in table 9). While some congregations participated in other concluding acts of worship, the majority including the *emunyani*. Even though the Maasai received this benediction from Scottish Presbyterian influence, the importance of the *emunyani* for Maasai congregations is shown in the manner in which it occurs in their churches.

In order to better understand what happens in these concluding acts, description and illustration are necessary. Variations, of course, occur from church to church, but at the conclusion of a typical worship service in Maasai PCEA congregations, the people begin to move outside. Usually, as the final hymn is being sung, the worship leaders of the day file out of the church to their immediate right beginning at the door and standing shoulder to shoulder. The congregation now follows, exits the building to the right and, one by one, shakes the hand or bows the head for a blessing in the traditional Maasai manner of each person now in the growing line which bends to begin forming a circle, facing inward. All the time, a hymn or praise song is usually sung. Often, the choir is the last out of the church and, when they find their place bringing the circle to completion, the singing concludes. At this point, the worship leader directs those gathered in the unison saying of the *emunyani* prayer of blessing. At the conclusion of this prayer and a loud *eesai* (amen), the people are free to engage in casual conversation prior to walking back to their homes and villages. Sometimes a special group of the church

such as the women's guild or youth, will meet at this time since most everyone is already present.

The unison recitation of the *emunyani* prayer, the personal greeting of each man, woman, and child, and the circular configuration of the congregation at the conclusion of many worship services are visible indicators of the importance of community in traditional Maasai culture and in the adaptations made in Maasai Christian worship to accommodate these important indigenous values. The following photograph (Fig. 79) illustrates a typical conclusion of a Maasai service of Christian worship.<sup>33</sup> The congregation has filed out, greeting the preacher, worship leader, special guests, and then one another. With the circle now formed, the *emunyani* is recited thus concluding the worship service of the day.



Fig. 79. Concluding Worship at *Oreteti Church* with the *Emunyani* Recited in a Fellowship Circle (2002).

<sup>33</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, OretetiEmunyani.jpeg.

This entire worship concluding event (song, exit, greeting/blessing, circle, *emunyani*) is certainly an amalgamation of both Christian and Maasai cultural practices. There are no dictates from the PCEA head office regarding these distinctives. In fact, most PCEA churches in the redefined *Ngong Hills* Presbytery bordering the study area, while utilizing the apostolic benediction to conclude their worship services, do not venture outside for a circle greeting because of both space considerations and more predominate formal influences of the past. The Scottish missionaries did not introduce the circle greeting at Kikuyu nor at the Presbyterian station at Chogoria. The historical record indicates that, in addition to the actual worship service itself, the times immediately before and after worship were marked by solemn quiet. In describing the conclusion of worship at Chogoria in 1932, missionary A.C. Irvine wrote,

...the whole congregation rises and sings the doxology. Then a closing prayer, hymn, and benediction. As they pass out, their eyes meet a blackboard on which someone has written, 'Silence! Do not greet one another while near the Church.' And most of the congregation converses in hoarse whispers, till at a distance.<sup>34</sup>

The description of the opening worship service for the new stone church at Kikuyu in 1933 portrays a solemn, dignified, and formal event both inside and outside of the building.<sup>35</sup>

Although the Scottish missionaries did not introduce nor encourage post-worship conclusion activities and the current PCEA leadership does not prescribe these activities in liturgical resources, there has been gradual assimilation of these

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<sup>34</sup>A.C. Irvine, "A Sunday at Chogoria," *Kikuyu News* 119 (March 1932), 20-21. These instructions seem to be peculiar to the situation in Kenya and not so much reflected in Presbyterian missions in Malawi, Zambia, or South Africa.

<sup>35</sup>John Arthur, "The Dedication of the Church of the Torch," *Kikuyu News* 126 (December 1933).



cultural practices. In many traditional rites and ceremonies the Maasai community will gather in a circle to visibly surround and support those who are the focus of the particular event. This physical demonstration of oneness with the community was important enough to Maasai Christians to incorporate into the practice of Christian worship for most of the congregations observed in this study.

A final evidence of cultural accommodation in concluding of worship is a slight, but significant variation in the actual words used for the apostolic blessing. In western Presbyterian worship, often ordained clergy use the benediction to impart a blessing on the congregation utilizing the words, "...be with *you* always." In the Maasai rendering, the words repeated by everyone are *metaa tenebo iyook taata ontarasi* (be with *us* all always). The significance is the changing of the of pronoun from the second person plural (you) to the first person plural form (us), thus shifting the focus of the words from someone imparting a blessing to the community praying God's blessing upon one another.<sup>36</sup>

The concluding drama of greeting and blessing, gathering in a fellowship circle, and recitation of the *emunyani* (the grace) that takes place in Maasai Christian churches is an acculturated practice mixing elements of traditional Maasai culture and learned Christian worship conventions. While the historic mission and current indigenous PCEA leadership did not take into account these unique factors of greeting and leave-taking, the Maasai people themselves have incorporated them into their own Christian worship services in a beautifully simple manner.

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<sup>36</sup>With so few ordained PCEA clergy working among Maasai churches, congregations have developed ways to dismiss themselves from worship without a minister to bless them. Even on the numerous occasions the writer has participated with Revs. Pulei or Mparinkoi in Maasai worship services, the recitation of the *emunyani* (grace) remains the same. It is said in unison by all, including the clergy, using *iyook* (us).

Survey Findings from PCEA Maasai Churches

*Length of Attendance*

In addition to the Worship Observation Reports, the contracted observers were instructed to administer a survey.<sup>37</sup> The survey instrument consisted of eleven questions. Questions one through four gathered basic data: the name of the church, the date of the survey, and the age and gender of the respondent. The observers were to randomly select ten people, including male and female, who were willing to respond to the set series of questions. In total, 350 people were surveyed in the three mission areas, of which 155 were men (44%) and 195 were women (56%).<sup>38</sup> In terms of the male-female ratio of those surveyed, the individual mission areas closely followed this percentage. In *Olchoronyori*, 17 men (43%), 23 women (57%) were surveyed; in *Injashat*, there were 40 men (44%), 50 women (56%); and in *Ewuaso* 98 men (45%), 122 women (55%) responded. This consistency of ratios in the individual mission areas further validates the use of the data as a representative sampling.

In general, Maasai culture teaches to be very wary of strangers and not to give too much information. This is particularly true with reference to the number of animals, the number of fighting men in a given area, the specific location of villages, and the whereabouts of the warrior encampment. Most of these concerns have to do with the security and protection of the group and have been passed down as values

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<sup>37</sup>See Appendices 4, 5, and 6.

<sup>38</sup> Some respondents did not answer every question of the survey instrument. Considering the 350 people surveyed, there were 2,100 possible responses for survey questions five through ten. For the entire study, there were only ten non-responses. This may have been due to an observer's error in not marking their response or an unknown reason the subject declined to comment. This knowledge accounts for the occasional varying number of responses to certain questions.

which keep the Maasai people intact. In the instance of the administration of a survey, initial concern might legitimately be raised on these grounds if those conducting the visitation were non-Maasai and had no communal authority to be there in the first place. This particular case study was unique. First, appropriate permission from ecclesiastical authorities was secured. Then, dissemination of an announcement to the congregations that there would be a visitor, approved by the PCEA, coming on some future Sunday and that this was part of a study being conducted by “Tauta” and a Maasai leadership team.<sup>39</sup> Finally, the observers attending to the field work were all of Maasai descent, grew up in close connection with Maasai culture, and spoke *ol Maa*. While any survey may be subject to false reporting of information by those questioned, in this case, every possible opportunity was taken to ensure that accurate responses were given.

#### *Years of Attendance*

Those surveyed were asked in survey question five the number of years they had been attending their particular church. Utilizing the figures shown in the table 10, for the *Olchoronyori* area, 64.5% of those surveyed had been in attendance seven or more years, 17.5% had attended between four and six years, while 22.5% had attended three years or less. This affirms the long existence of many of the congregations in this outreach area. *Olooseos* (O1), for instance, has been in existence since the initiation of the Maasai Rural Development Centre in 1968. One

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<sup>39</sup>*Tauta* is the Maasai name given to the author in 1982 meaning “leader.” Because of my long-standing relationship with the PCEA and the Maasai people in its charge, I have a unique position of respect in the community at large. My association as the leader of the study gave an additional credibility to the project and offers support to the case for considering the responses given in the survey to be accurate.

indication of *Olooseos*' long history is found in a 1974 PCEA report where thirty-five church members were reported.<sup>40</sup> In the *Injashat* area, there is also evidence of a long-standing PCEA presence. Of those surveyed, 53% had been coming to their respective churches for seven or more years, 21% had come four to six years, and 26% had been in attendance for three years or less. Table 11 illustrates *Injashat*'s length of attendance data. Finally, table 12 shows *Ewuaso*'s attendance figures. Compared to the *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* areas, *Ewuaso* had only 18% who attended their churches for seven or more years, 18% attended four to six years, while 64% had attended only three years or less. Also of significance is the 23% who had attended their *Ewuaso* church less than one year. These figures demonstrate the relative newness, and also the establishment of additional churches associated with that mission area.

Table 10. *Olchoronyori* Length of Attendance

< 1 Year	1 – 3 Years	4 – 6 Years	7 – 9 Years	10 or + Years
5	4	7	5	19
12.5%	10%	17.5%	12.5%	47.5%

Table 11. *Injashat* Length of Attendance

< 1 Year	1 – 3 Years	4 – 6 Years	7 – 9 Years	10 or + Years
6	18	19	14	33
6%	20%	21%	16%	37%

<sup>40</sup>Ron Moffatt, ed., *Presbyterian Church of East Africa Handbook* (Nairobi: Jitegemea Publishers, 1974), 55-58.

Table 12. *Ewuaso* Length of Attendance

< 1 Year	1 – 3 Years	4 – 6 Years	7 – 9 Years	10 or + Years
51	89	40	9	31
23%	41%	18%	4%	14%

There appears to be a two-fold reason for the attendance figures from the *Ewuaso* area. First, the *Ewuaso* area, because of its remoteness and harsh environment, was the last of the three outreach areas to be developed by the PCEA. In 1988, there were only four churches in the entire *Ewuaso* area. The treacherous rock and dirt (or mud, depending on the season) bush track to reach these churches was impassable except to the most stout of four-wheel drive vehicles. The speediest of journeys into the area required at least one overnight stay and, during the rainy season, could extend indefinitely if the river swelled. Very few PCEA pastors ventured forth and the last full-time foreign missionaries solely assisting the PCEA in Maasai work departed late in 1989. The majority of the congregations in *Ewuaso* have only recently been established.

This leads to the second reason, the assignment of Pastor Stephen Mparingoi to work specifically in the *Ewuaso* region. With Mparinkoi's assignment, a number of lay leaders received some basic instruction by Mparinkoi to assist him in establishing and assisting many new churches. The length of attendance in *Ewuaso* region is directly related to the length the churches have been established and the recent assignment of PCEA staff to work with them. Because of these factors relating to the *Ewuaso*'s unique position among the three outreach areas, when taken as a whole, attendance length for the three mission area cluster shows a tilting



toward newer participants with 50% having attended three years or less, 18% attending four to six years, and 32% reporting attendance seven years or more.

### *Worship Satisfaction*

Survey question number six queried the general satisfaction level of the congregant's overall worship experience. In all survey questions seeking attitudinal information, the five-point Likert Scale offered responders the following choices: very positive, positive, neutral, negative, and very negative. In the English language, one might pose the query, "How satisfied are you with the worship at this church?" In drafting a cultural equivalent translation into the Maasai language, the translation team of Pulei, Kurraru, and Mparinkoi discussed many different ways to render the question and the various nuances of each. As a result, they suggested utilizing the word *aikununo* that asks what something is like or what it resembles. Frans Mol renders *aikununo* simply "to be as, to be alike, to resemble."<sup>41</sup> In the region of this PRA, it seems this word has a somewhat broader meaning than Mol indicates. It was clear in discussing this question with the translation team that, used interrogatively, the word carries the force of soliciting an opinion of what something was like, good or bad, without intimating any prejudicial leanings one way or the other which was the desire of the researcher. In addition, since there is no one word in *ol Maa* that adequately describes the whole of a worship service, this translation team suggested utilizing the two words *enkomono* (fellowship) and *enchula* (prayers) to describe worship so that it was clear the observer was asking about the entire service and not just one part. The varying choices for responses were much easier to determine. In the following tables (Tables 13, 14, 15, and 16), ++ indicates

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<sup>41</sup>Mol, *Maasai Dictionary*, 102.

the very positive response of *anyor*, a strong word of like, even love, whereas - - indicates the very negative response of *manyor*, a strong word of dislike, *even hate*; a single + sign indicates the positive attitude of *sidai*, the generic word for like and a single - indicates the negative response of *mesidai*, the generic word for dislike; and finally, a \* indicates a neutral response by using the words *mme oleng* which literally translates “not very,” but has the cultural connotation of something that is neither good nor bad. If clarification was necessary, observers could also use *onusu*, which literally translates “half,” but, in the context of the survey, indicates a midpoint between like and dislike.

Table 13. General Worship Satisfaction in the *Olchoronyori* Area

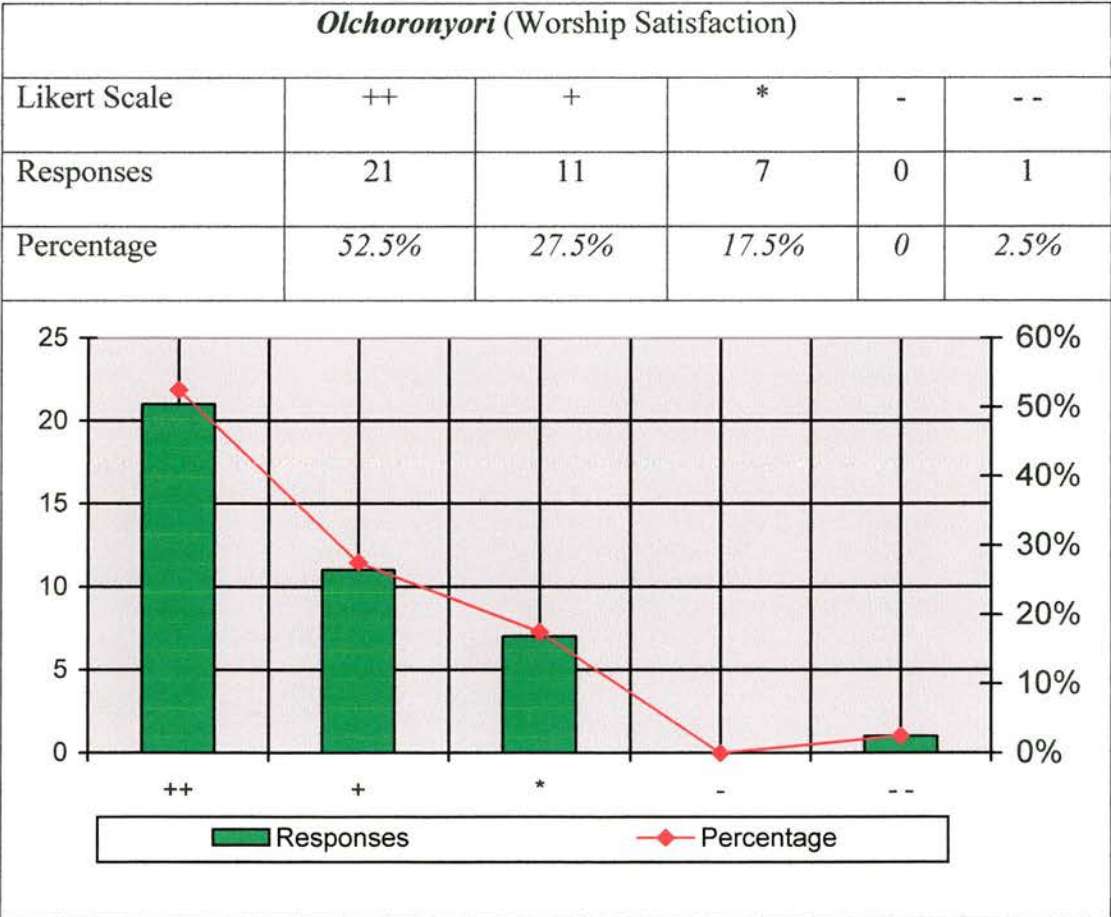


Table 14. General Worship Satisfaction in the *Injashat* Area

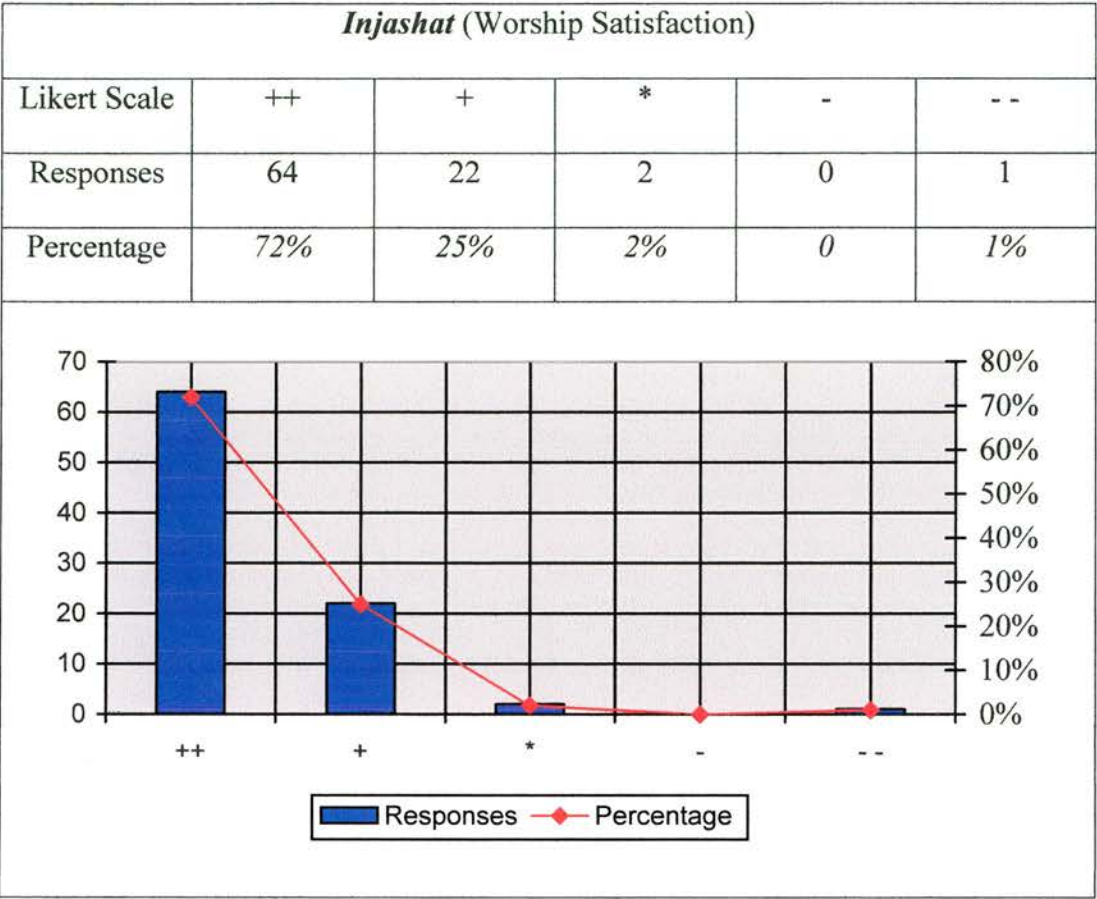


Table 15. General Worship Satisfaction in the *Ewuaso* Area

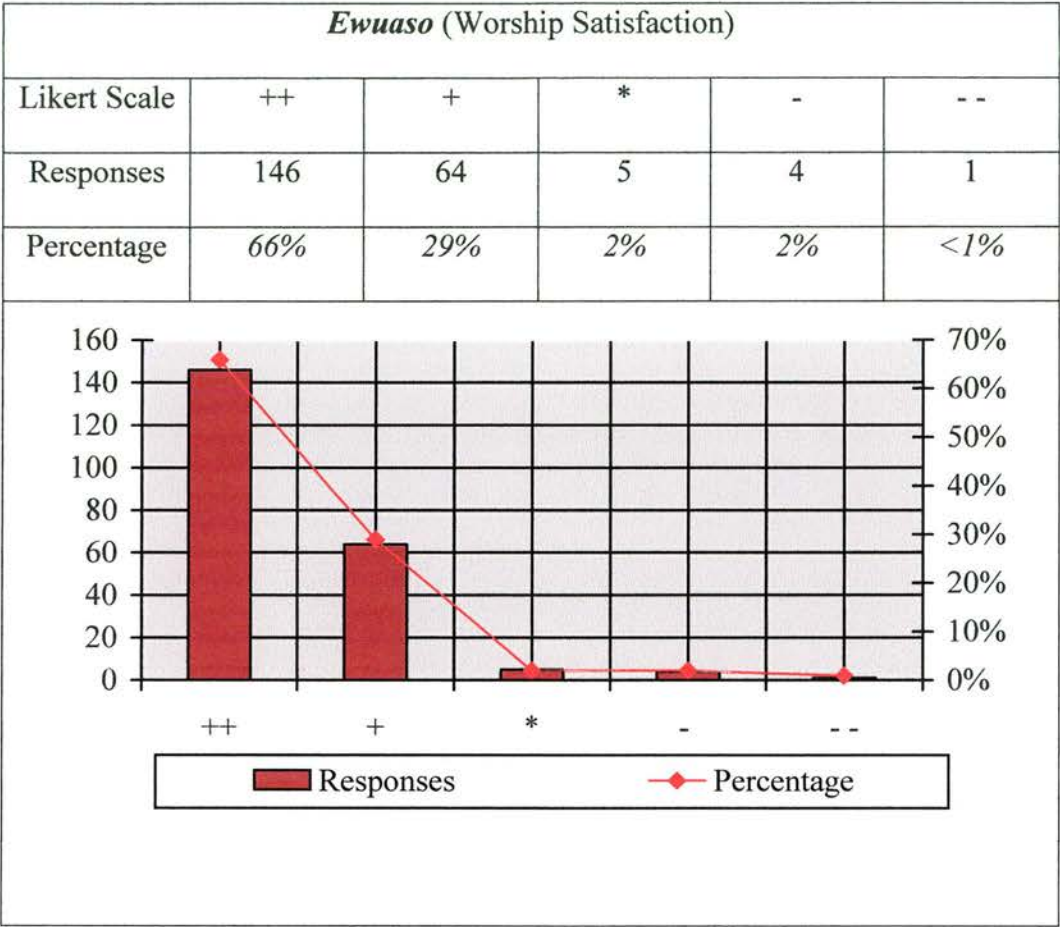
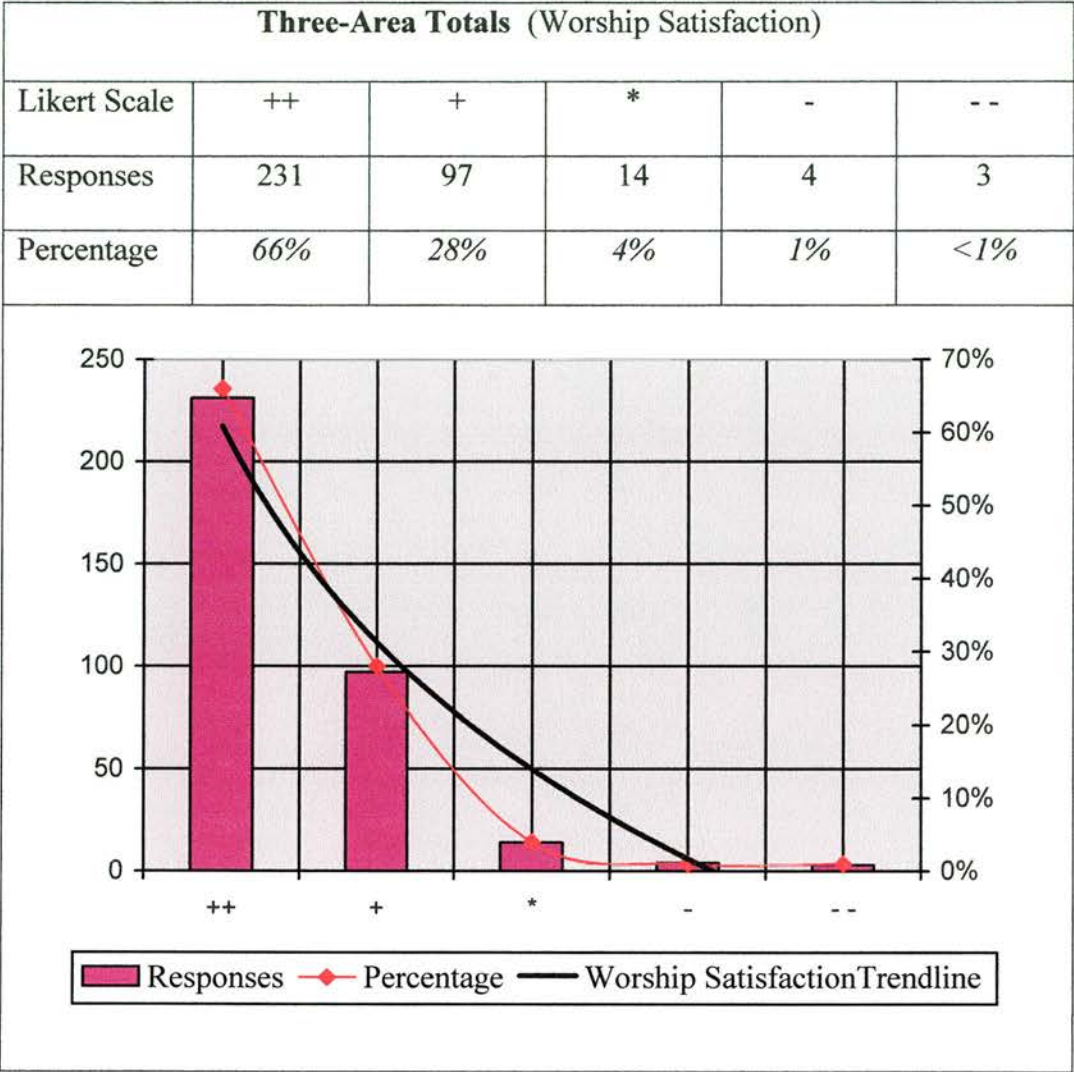




Table 16. General Worship Satisfaction in the Combined Olchoronyori, Injashat, and Ewuaso Areas<sup>42</sup>



<sup>42</sup>In order to reflect the actual numbers reported, the three-area summaries presented here and in subsequent reporting are the result of the simple method of division of the total numbers collected for each response by the number of outreach areas, three. Any method of factoring the areas with larger numbers of responses (Injashat and Ewuaso) to a proportion of the area with the smaller number of responses (Olchoronyori) would give an inordinate weight to a particular region. So, by presenting the individual mission areas in their own data tables and then offering an additional table showing the collective grouping, a reflection of the actual situation and number of responses in the entire geographic region encompassed by the three mission areas is achieved.



In reviewing the survey data for question six, it is clear that in each of the three mission areas and, subsequently, in the combined response figures, there exists a high level of satisfaction with the experience of Christian worship in the thirty-five PCEA Maasai congregations subject to this study. In each area, a vast majority responded with either a very positive (*anyor*) or a positive (*sidai*) indication (*Olchoronyori* = 80%, *Injashat* = 97%, *Ewuaso* = 95%). The three-area total for those responding with very positive or positive attitudes toward their worship experiences figured at a 94% rate. No particular areas reported significant dissatisfaction with their worship experiences. In fact, for the three-area total, less than 2% of all those surveyed reported that they disliked or strongly disliked their worship experiences.

One peculiarity emerged, however, in considering the individual mission areas. The *Olchoronyori* area, like the other two areas, had a vast majority of those attending worship report they were satisfied or very satisfied. However, also in *Olchoronyori* there seemed to exist a significant minority (17.5%) who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with worship. A review of the specific survey documents for each of those persons who gave this response (*mme oleng/onusu*) resulted in the discovery of several comments freely given and recorded when, at the conclusion of the survey, each person was asked if there were any other remarks they would like to make. There were three comments by participants at the *Olooseos* Church (O1) and four from *Ilmasin* (O2). The following three comments were made by women in their middle age: Respondent O1-2 said, "I want to have parts of culture and dress that are good." Another (O1-4) said, "I want freedom to praise God as I want." The final commentator from *Olooseos* (O1-10) said, "I want people to pray to God in the

Spirit, speak in tongues, and cry if they wish.” Turning to the *Ilmasin* Church (O2), there were two older men who offered comments as well as two older women. One man (O2-3) stated, “We need prayers very much so that people may know that God may uplift the church.” The other male parishioner (O2-5) said, “I would like the church to have an evangelist who would be going to homes and fellowship with people so that people would be attracted to the church because we are very few in our church.” One of the women (O2-7) commented, “I would like Maasai culture to be introduced in our church.” The other woman (O2-10) said, “I want people in the church to be united because there is no unity among the people.”

The issues arising from these comments are significant as they may be indicative of broader issues facing PCEA Maasai churches. In two of these commentaries, (O1-4, O1-10), there is an apparent desire for more liberty in the expression of worship. Respondent O1-10 shows a desire for more freedom as the worship activities she lists are either not in use or not allowed in her church. The use of the Maasai word *aserem* in the comments by respondent O1-4 is insightful as it means not only “praise,” but the actual lifting up or the raising up of praise.

The concern of respondent O1-4 is not an isolated desire. In fact, it appears that a number of PCEA Maasai churches are beginning to respond to a grassroots desire among congregants for more expressive worship. This is particularly noticeable in the area of worship music. A new, locally written praise chorus utilizes this word interwoven in an indigenous musical form.

*Iyie serem oltau lai*  
*Iyie serem oltau lai*  
*Iyie serem oltau lai*  
*Enkai magdilani!*

(I lift the praise of my soul to You,)  
 (I lift the praise of my soul to You,)  
 (I lift the praise of my soul to You,)  
 (Almighty God!)

As this unique praise chorus is sung, men and women extend their arms heavenward, often beginning at their chest and raising their hands upward as if they were holding out an offering. The leader of the chorus may make up additional refrains always singing the first line as a solo so that those gathered might hear the words in order to join in on the next repetitions.<sup>43</sup>

Another issue coming from these comments is a desire for more freedom of expression. In the instances of respondents O1-2 and O2-7, it is a desire for cultural liberty. The ability to freely wear indigenous clothing to church without being ridiculed or looked down upon is important to these two women. As I noted in discussing clergy dress in Chapter Three, there is a tension between those who don western clothing in their genuine belief that a western outfit is the mark of success, education, and advancement to being part of today's world and those who wear western dress because they are forced to either by ecclesiastical rules or peer pressures. The point here is that two out of the seven (29%) of those who indicated only a modicum of satisfaction with worship in their churches saw issues of freedom in what to wear to worship as being important enough to articulate their concerns out loud to the observers. The issue of Maasai cultural expression (*olkuaak lool Maasai*) that is deemed good or bad (O1-2) is a point that will be discussed in further detail next in a review of survey question seven regarding cultural practices in worship. For this point, suffice it to say that these two women desire more freedom of Maasai cultural expression through dress and other activities in services of Christian worship.

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<sup>43</sup>This chorus is included on the CD: Iyie Serem Oltau Lai.mp3. Compare this and other *indungetta* with hymns also on the CD. See: Kaanyikai Enkai (Hymn 100, Nearer My God to Thee, Kimuka, 28 July 2002).mp3.

The two men and other woman (O2-3, O2-5, O2-10) from *Ilmasin* (O2) turned their comments towards church growth and revitalization. One man (O2-3) hoped that God would “uplift the church,” while the other man (O2-5) wanted an evangelist assigned to the church to facilitate church growth. The woman (O2-10) expressed her desire for unity indicating that there may have been some sort of a rift in her congregation.

There was only one survey in the four-parish, *Olchoronyori* area, that indicated a strong dislike (*manyor*) for the worship experience in their church. A young man (O2-2) made the following commentary on his dissatisfaction for worship at the *Ilmasin* Church. “I want the Maasai culture to be introduced in our church, because the Maasai people are moving to the other churches like A.I.C. (African Inland Church) because nobody bothers about the Maasai in the church.” Although this comment comes from an extremely minor percentage (2.5%) representing dissatisfaction with worship experience, when added to the 17.5% who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, the figure becomes 20% of those in the *Olchoronyori* area whose attitudinal posture is, at best, neutral. Compared to the combined neutral, negative, and very negative responses of *Injashat* and *Ewuaso*, 3% and <5%, respectively, *Olchoronyori* has the highest rate.

This high rate in *Olchoronyori* may be linked to the dynamic tensions of the cultural mix in the areas surrounding the four congregations that comprise the outreach area. In viewing the congregational demographics for *Olooseos* (O1), *Imasin* (O2) *Oldanyati* (O3), *Olepolos* (O4),<sup>44</sup> it is apparent that there is a more

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<sup>44</sup>See Table 9, “Elements of and Participation in Worship PCEA Maasai Churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat* and *Ewuaso* Areas.”

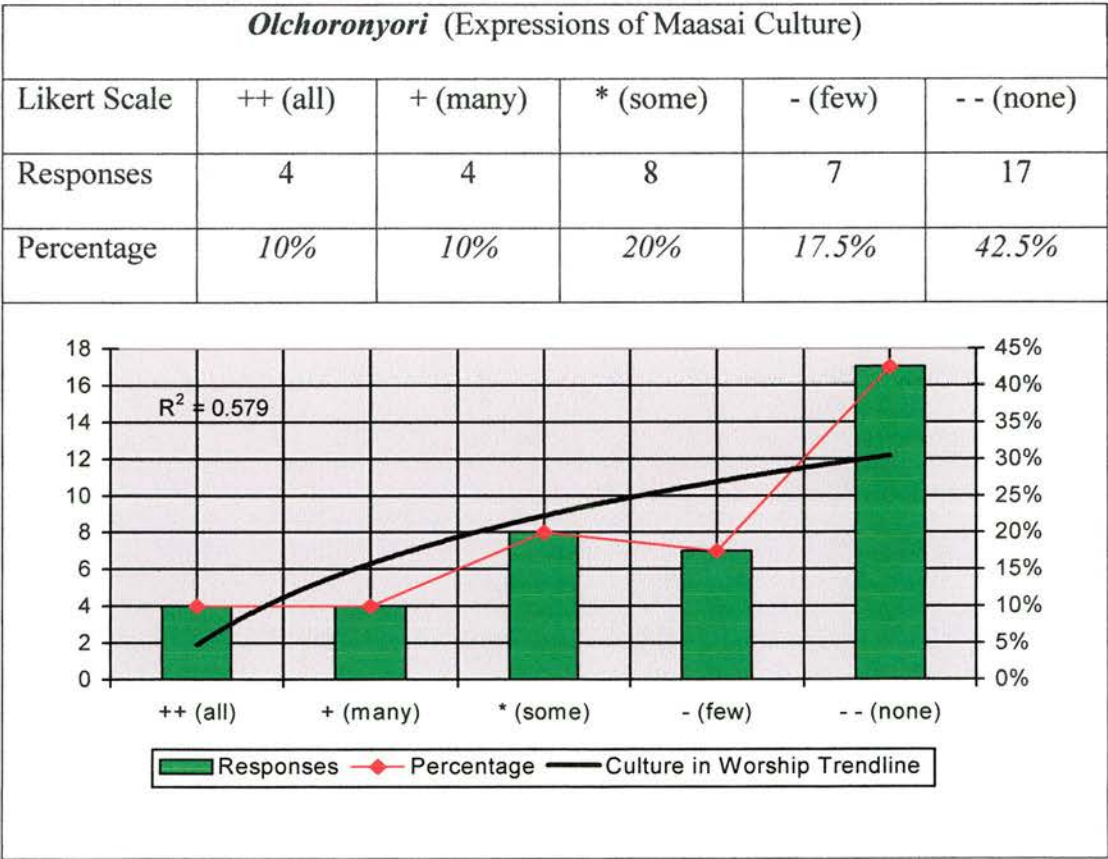
heterogeneous mix of people in *Olchoronyori* than any other churches in the three mission areas studied. At the time of observation, the people attending these four churches had ethnic backgrounds of Kikuyu, Maasai, Anglo Western, Luo, and Kisi. With such a wide mixture of people representing vastly different cultural and worldviews, the presentation of a worship service pleasing to each group is a challenge. Another factor is that of education and economic station. Statistical data was not collected for this factor, however, on the basis of observation of homes, dress, abilities, and number of children in school, education and financial ability may be used to suggest a possible reason for *Olchoronyori*'s higher rate of worship ambivalence and dissatisfaction. For example, in many places in the *Olchoronyori* area, one finds a traditional stick and mud home next door to a professionally constructed stone home complete with water tanks and solar power. Also, in this area, there are households with no children in school and others with children who have completed university level course work. Because such a mix of educational attainment and economic prowess in the area surrounding these four *Olchoronyori* churches exists, those attending worship may be wishing for something other than they have whether that is to be more like the cosmopolitan St. Andrew's in Nairobi or like the rural churches on the way to Mosiro. In either case, the result of the case study data shows a feeling of discontent.



Maasai Cultural Expression in Worship

Survey question number seven inquired of the use of Maasai cultural expression in the context of Christian worship, “Do you have expressions of Maasai culture in this church?” The intent of the question was to gauge the actual practice and proliferation of Maasai distinctives in Christian worship. Again, this questions utilized a five-point Likert Scale for this subject with ++ representing *pooki*, which means “all,” + indicating *kumok* or “many,” \* for *kuti*, which may be translated “some,” - for *kuti oleng*, meaning “few,” and - - representing *meetai*, none. The following tables 17, 18, 19, and 20 present the accumulation of the data for question number seven.

Table 17. Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship in the *Olchoronyori* Area



The data for *Olchoronyori* is not surprising. Given the fact that this area has significantly changed in its demographic composition in recent years, the four congregations represented are made up of a varied constituency. The worship observation reports indicate that while both Kikuyu and Maasai people attended service at *Olooseos* (O1) Church located on the grounds of the former Maasai Rural Development Centre, the predominate group was Kikuyu. At the *Ilmasin* Church (O2), again both Kikuyu and Maasai people worshipped, but the Kikuyu had the most present. As the next two churches move geographically southward and slightly more removed from the *Kiserian* trading center, there is a shift in representation. At *Oldanyati* (O3), again, both Kikuyu and Maasai people gathered for worship, but at this church, the Maasai outnumber Kikuyu worshippers. The same situation was present at *Olepolos* (O4) where the Maasai were the predominate people in attendance along with a sizable number of Kikuyu and a few from the Luo and Kisi groups.

As far as language use is concerned, the same pattern emerges. Those gathered for worship at *Oloosesos* (O1) heard exclusively songs and speaking in the Swahili language and at *Ilmasin* (O2) both the Swahili and English languages were used. Neither heard *ol Maa*. The *Oldanyati* (O3) and *Olepolos* (O4) congregations utilized both the Swahili and the Maasai languages in their worship. When one considers this detail of language usage, it gives further evidence to the heterogeneous mix of people gathered for worship in the *Olchoronyori* area.

There seems to be some confusion in regards to expressions of Maasai culture present in services of Christian worship in the three mission areas surveyed. This will be discussed in further detail when considering survey question number

nine, and what exactly is considered an expression of Maasai culture in worship. The Worship Observation Reports revealed sizable majority (60%) of those surveyed in the *Olchoronyori* area stated that there were few or no expressions of Maasai distinctiveness in their church services; 20% percent said there were some practices; 10% thought many, and 10% thought all expressions were represented.

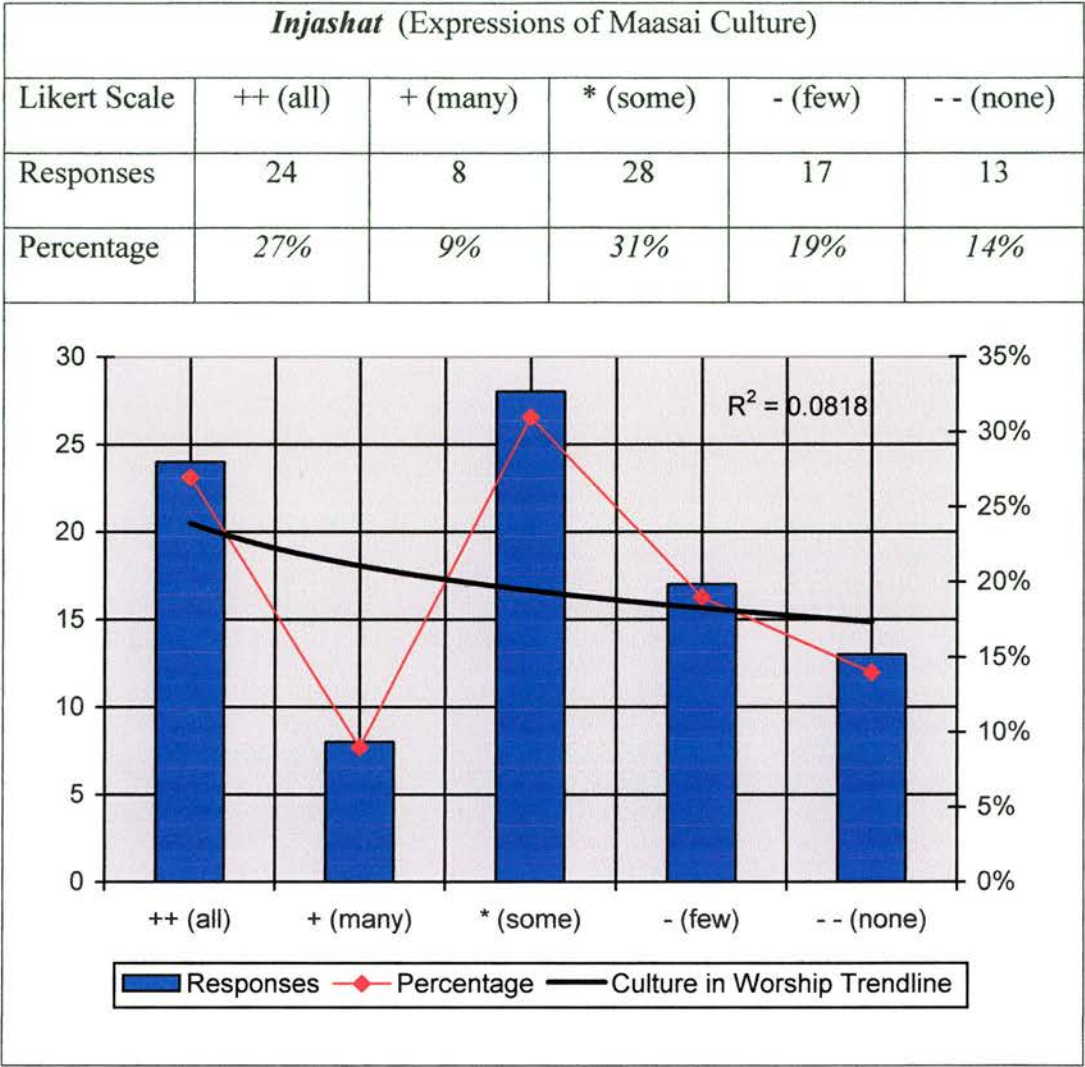
In the *Injashat* mission area, one finds congregations in both reasonable proximity to the dirt track that runs behind the *Ngong Hills* connecting the towns of *Ngong* with *Kisames* and congregations far removed from it. Furthermore, this area has experienced enormous changes in recent years as a result of government land demarcation. Once an open expanse dotted with Maasai villages, the valley land on the western side of the *Ngong Hills* now takes on the appearance of seemingly contiguous cross-fenced farms. Many of these properties have been sold by the original Maasai owners to Kikuyu farmers who have established entrepreneurial agrarian enterprises across the valley floor and hillside becoming part of the community. A number of these farms are investment properties held by absentee landowners.

Consequently, some of the PCEA Maasai churches in the *Injashat* area have seen an influx of Kikuyu members. This is particularly evident in *Naironde* (I1), *Oloshoibor* (I3), *Olasiti* (I4), and *Kimuka* (I5) where observers noted both Maasai and Kikuyu people present in worship. The other congregations of *Injashat*, *Ilgarooj* (I2), *Olmaroroi* (I6), *Nasaru* (I8), and *Neson Koyo* (I9) are all more remote in physical location and more difficult to access than the others. They are also in areas where extensive land acquisitions by non-Maasai people have not yet occurred. In such a position, their constituency is entirely made up of Maasai

people. The church at *Saikeri* (I7) is the farthest removed inland in the *Injashat* area, yet the observer reports both Maasai and Kikuyu people present in worship and both the Maasai and the Swahili languages being used by the worship leader showing that there were enough non-Maasai speaking attendees present to warrant translation. On preliminary consideration, this seems odd, however, it is an accurate report. On further investigation, one discovers that there is a major water project with a dam and windmill at *Saikeri*. Originally constructed as part of the previously mentioned work of MASI, it is now managed by government workers who live in the *Saikeri* area. There is also a model school in *Saikeri*, part of a MASI/PCEA church initiative, which employs a number of government-employed teachers. Most of these employees are Kikuyu. A periodically graded dirt road extends from *Ngong* town to *Saikeri* allowing for transport and commerce thus adding to the expanding diversity of the area. In addition, there are Kikuyu wives Maasai men have married to assist them in establishing small farms. These factors help explain why there are both Maasai and Kikuyu people worshipping in this remote location in the heart of Maasai territory.

The trend line on the following *Injashat* table (Table 18) shows a very gentle rise towards the existence of expressions of Maasai culture in worship. Compared with the trend lines from the other mission areas and the multi-area totals, the trend line in the *Injashat* area can be viewed as the flattest of all (*Injashat*/ $R = .0818$ , *Olchoronyori*/ $R = .579$ , *Ewuaso*/ $R = .7786$ ). This indicates a fairly even distribution of opinion on the matter throughout the range of response. This graphic plotting correlates to the reality of a growing diversity of population within the *Injashat* area.

Table 18. Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship in the *Injashat* Area

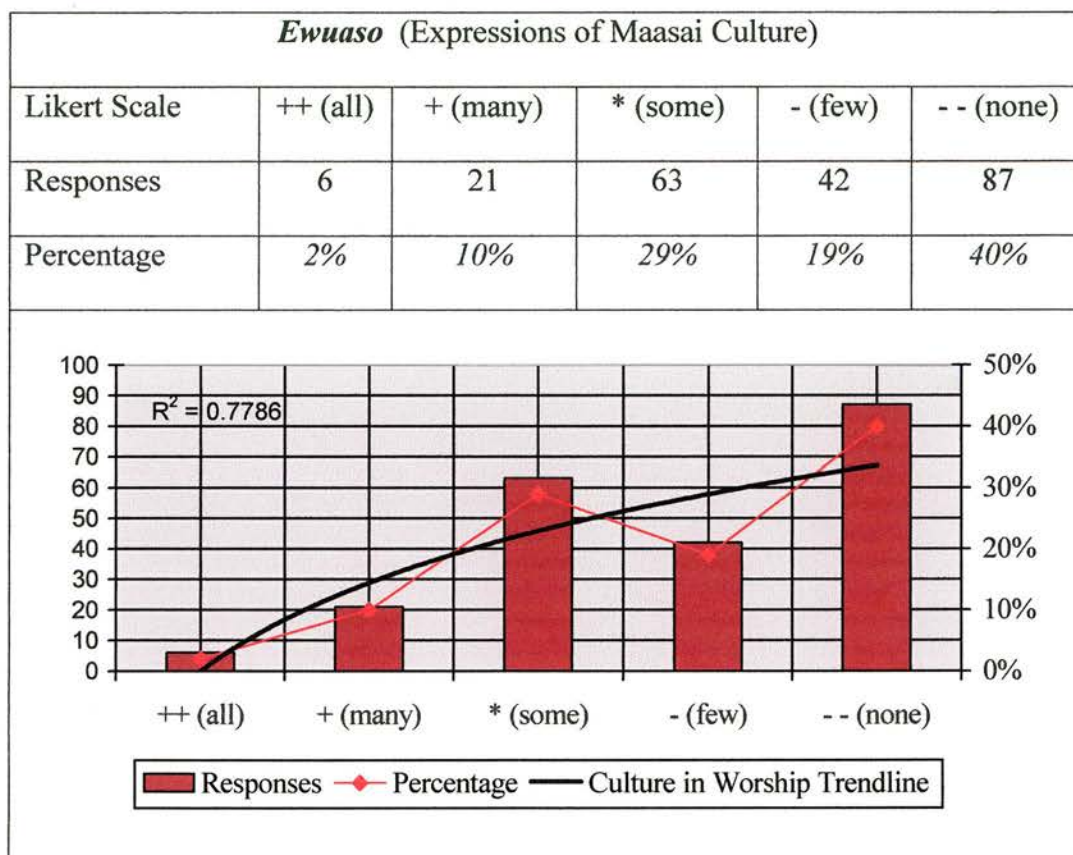


The *Ewuaso* mission area (Table 19) is the most far removed of the three study areas from cities, towns, trading centers, and paved roads. It is also the harshest area, environmentally speaking, with significantly less rainfall than *Injashat* on the western side of the *Ngong Hills*, and especially *Olchoronyori* on the eastern side of the *Ngong Hills*. These factors have made purchase of demarcated land an unattractive proposition for prospective entrepreneurs from outside Maasai society. There has been very little influx of Kikuyu or any other peoples into the *Ewuaso*



mission area. The exceptions to this generalization are linked to a government water project in *Najile* (E1), church initiated, government staffed schools, and the rapid development of an extensive trading center in *Osero Onoykie* (E2). Because of this, there is evidence of a very small presence of non-Maasai people, mainly Kikuyu, in the *Ewuaso* area; however, the overwhelming majority of people living in this mission area are of Maasai descent.

Table 19. Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship in the *Ewuaso* Area

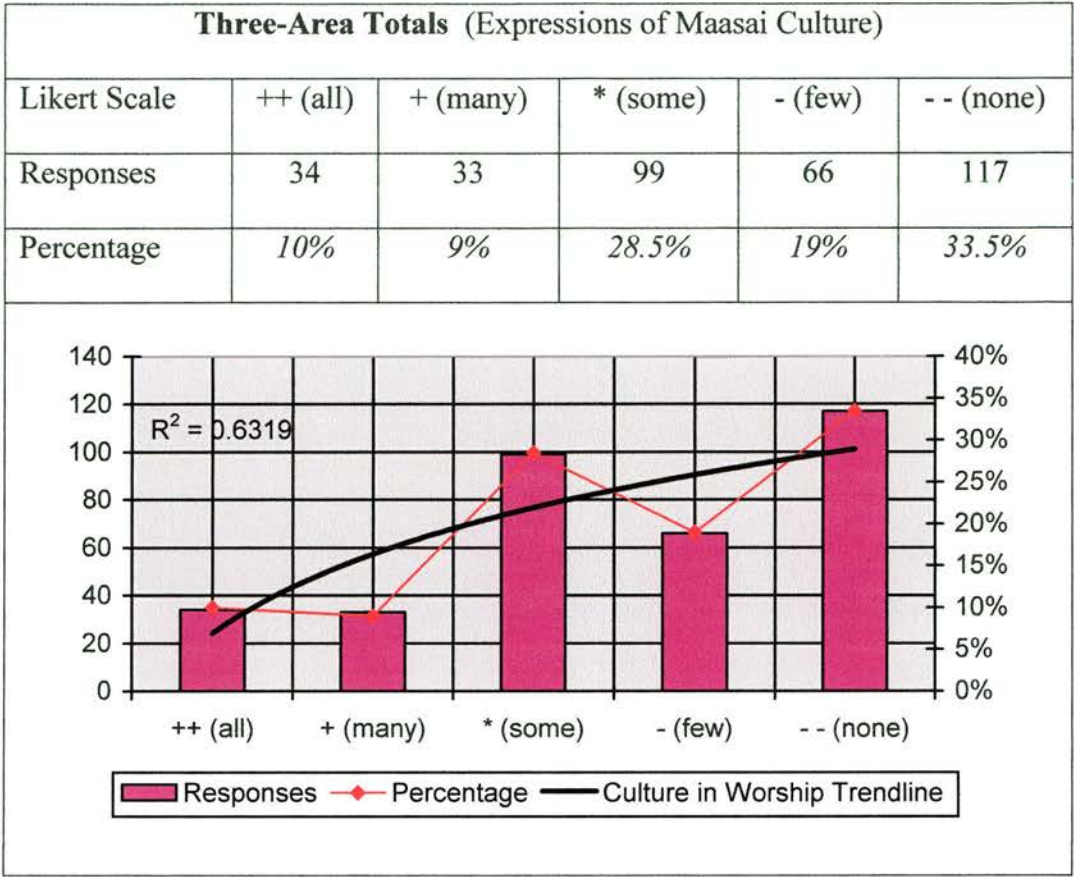


The *Ewuaso* mission area, given its remoteness, has not seen the cultural shifts in as dramatic a manner as the *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* areas. Of the three mission outreach areas, the *Ewuaso* area can be considered the most traditional in terms of its day-to-day practice of Maasai cultural expression. Therefore, it is

somewhat surprising to note that 59% of those surveyed in this area indicated that there were few, if any, expressions of Maasai culture in Christian worship, while only 10% indicated that there were many, and just 2% said all Maasai expressions were included. The trend line for the *Ewuaso* area definitely indicates a leaning towards the absence of expression. As an area very much connected with the Maasai culture (*olkuaak loo Maasai*), persons in this region may be interpreting the question as specifically referring to traditional ceremonies, rites, passages, and practices of the *oloiboni* (traditional spiritual leader). These practices of Maasai society are not part of the PCEA experience and could, therefore, have been what was in mind and were summarily excluded from consideration. Also, if one considers the possibility that the Maasai living in the *Ewuaso* area may have a different or more traditional expectation of what Maasai culture is, these statistical figures may not be unusual at all. In this case, the Maasai people queried would likely be responding negatively because they do not see the specific, traditional Maasai elements of rites and ceremonies in Christian worship.

With the near flat response of the *Injashat* area, *Olchoronyori*'s predictable response, and the surprising response of *Ewuaso*, the combined data from the three mission areas show a trend toward responses of some, few, and none (Table 20). Overall then, those who perceive that there are few or no expressions of Maasai cultural distinctives in Christian worship rate 52.5% of the survey sampling while 19% perceive that there are many or all expressed, and 28.5% think some occur.

Table 20. Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship  
in the Combined *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas



In general, there are several expressions of Maasai culture that seem to be most prevalent in particular churches as evidenced by the observer’s reports and photographic records, as well as by the author’s site visits. The acts of greeting and leaving have special significance in Maasai culture and are evident in many of the PCEA congregations. These acts of interpersonal interaction are much more than a cursory societal obligation, for at the heart of their practice lies the Maasai core value of respect. When parishioners gather at the church site for worship, a natural yet highly regulated ritual for greeting occurs. Much of this gesture is based on the patriarchal structure of the Maasai society. Like-gender, age-mates greet one

another with a handshake, while all children and women of age sets below the male being greeted bow their head for a touch of blessing. All children give older women the respect of a bowed head. Very old women are given an even higher degree of respect as all children, youth of both genders, and younger women will bow to a *kokoo* (very old woman, grandmother) for a blessing and, on occasion, even spittle, a special honor. The observers at the *Nasaru* (I8) and *Saikeri* (I7) churches took the following photographs of the congregations greeting one another. In the following figures, especially to be noted are the children and young woman respectfully bowing their heads to their elders and the woman on the far right of the photograph imparting her blessing on a child carrying a baby (Fig. 80).<sup>45</sup> PCEA evangelist Jeremiah Tomanka converses with the children after Sunday School lessons (Fig. 81).<sup>46</sup> In both photographs, the newly circumcised young girls wear cowrie shells head pieces (*osikirai*-cowrie shell; *enkishile*-cowrie shell head band) and dark cloth wraps as visible indications to the community at large that they are entering their next stage of life. This tradition of female circumcision, banned by the PCEA, is still practiced in many Maasai communities. Some of those undergoing the rite are, as evidence by these photographs, part of the Christian worshipping communities.

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<sup>45</sup>I9-OutsideGreeting.jpeg.

<sup>46</sup>I7-ChurchBldgWPeople.jpeg.



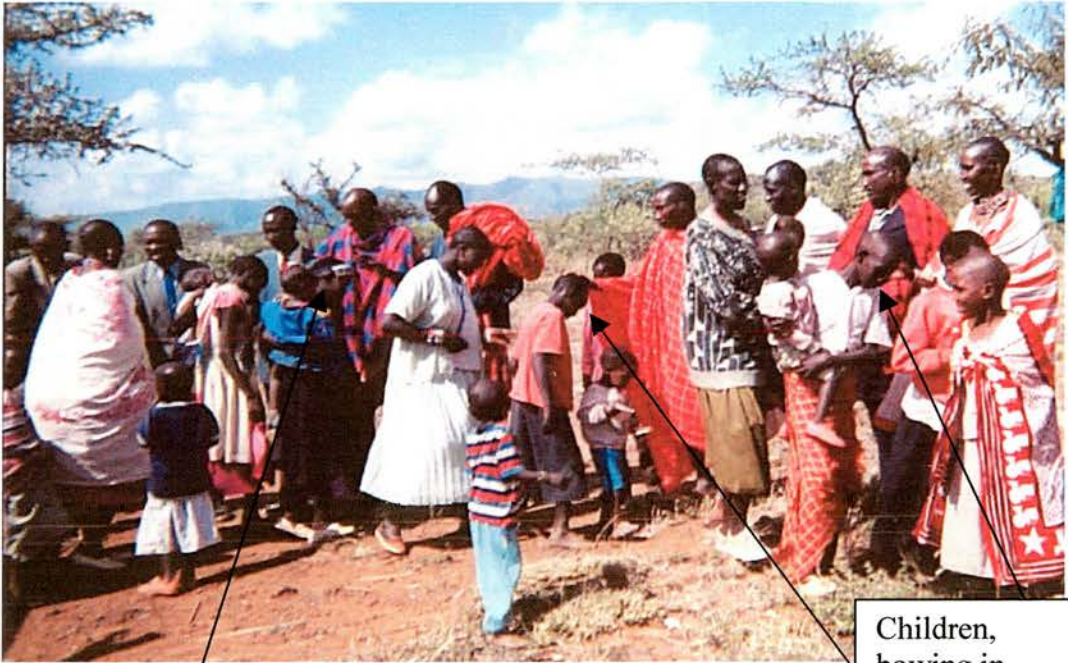


Fig. 80. Greeting at *Nasuru* (I8).

Cowrie shells and dark wraps are indicative of recent circumcision.

Children, bowing in respect, receive blessing from man (l) and woman (r).

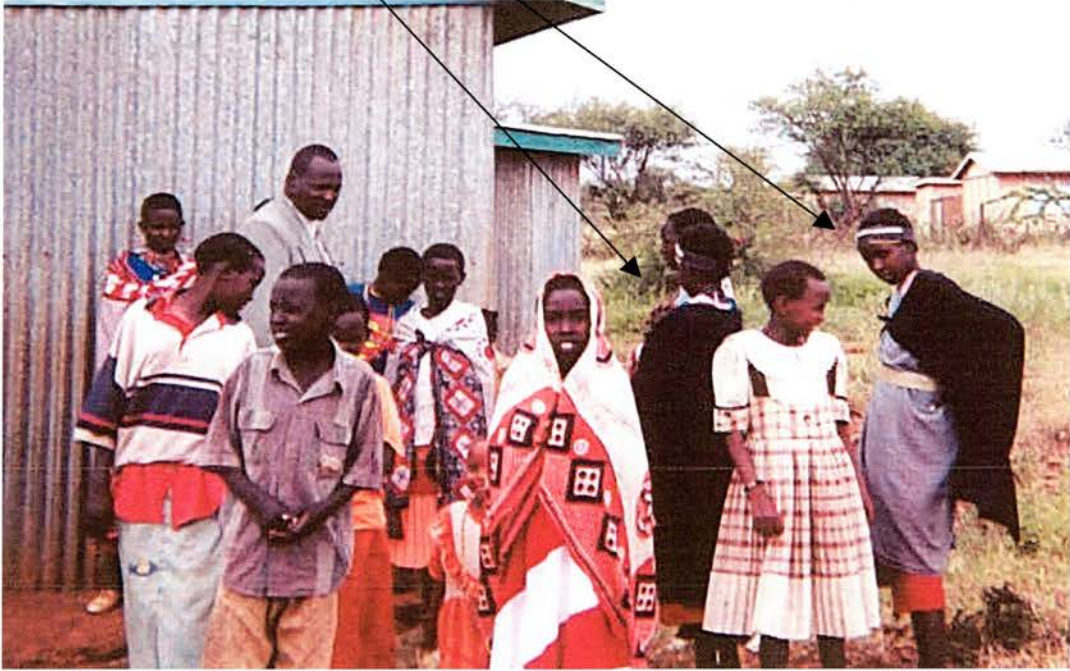


Fig. 81. Greeting the Children at *Saikeri* (I7).



Another general element that may be considered part of Maasai cultural expression in the church is the division of men and women for the conducting of worship services. Traditionally, this division of men and women is not at all unusual. In view of the patriarchal organization of Maasai society, men and women often divide into gender specific groups for special rites as well as for daily activities. The constituents of the previously mentioned *olamal* (delegation) are divided by gender. Another simple example of this occurs each day in every Maasai *enkang* (village): the care of animals. The divisions of labor in regard to the care of goats, sheep, and cattle are clearly by gender. Men and boys are responsible for taking the animals to water and pasture, for seeing to it that they are healthy, and for protecting the herds. Women and girls take charge of milking the animals, assisting with birthing, and caring for newborns.

This cultural distinctive of physical division of men and women in various life situations is shared in many parts of Africa. Because it is also a distinct part of Maasai culture, it is therefore not surprising that in many PCEA Maasai congregations, the men sit on one side of the center of the worship space and the women sit on the other. Children sit mostly with the women. As children grow older, they are less constrained and often freely wander from one side to the other, although they mainly stay on the side with the women and older girls. This division is evident in both a service inside the building at *Olodungoro* (E4) and *Sairrashie* (E15) and in worship under a tree at *Soitamurt* (E14) as the following photographs illustrate.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>E4-MenVsWomen.jpeg, E15-MenVsWomen.jpeg, E14-MenVsWomen.jpeg.



Fig. 82. Women and Men at *Olodungoro* (E4) Worship.

Seating for Women

Seating for Men

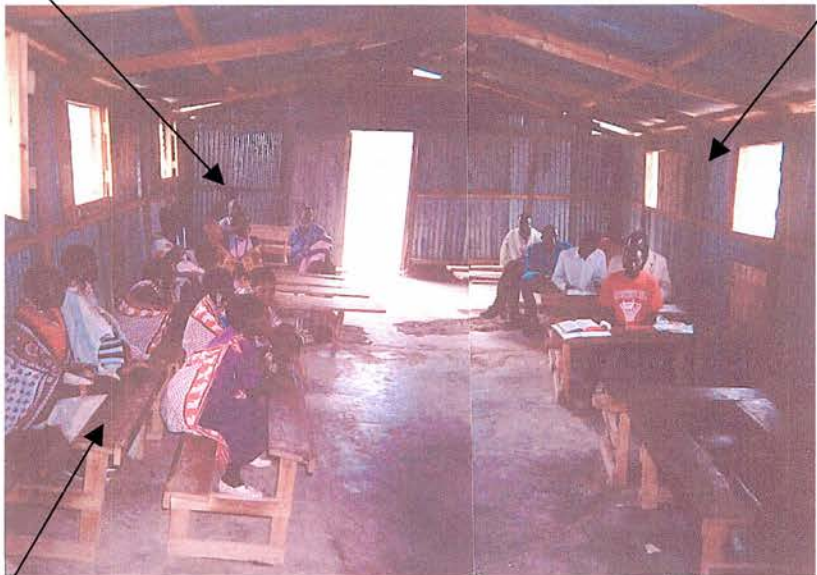


Fig. 83. Women and Men at *Sairrashie* (E15) Worship.

Seating for Choir



Fig. 84. Women and Men at *Soitamurt* (E14) Worship.

A final cultural element that seems to be common in many PCEA Maasai congregations is the wearing of indigenous clothing and ornamentation. In the next section examining survey question number eight, there are further comments on this practice and the attitudes surrounding it, but at this juncture it is sufficient to point out that many of those attending services of Christian worship in PCEA Maasai congregations in the three mission areas observed wear traditional outfits. In previous photographs (Figs. 82, 83, and 84), a number of Maasai people are seen in traditional attire. The photograph below (Fig. 85) shows a group gathered for worship mostly wearing traditional clothes and bead ornamentation.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>E10-Worship.jpeg.





Fig. 85. Worshipers at *Eluai* (E10).

Although many Maasai wear traditional dress to worship, there seems to be a pattern of difference between the worship attire of men and of women. In reviewing many of the photographs associated with this study, it is plain that men wear western outfits more than do women. While there are a number of women in western dresses or skirts and blouses, there are far more men in trousers, shirts with ties, and jackets. This obvious distinction is apparent in the preceding photograph (Fig. 84) of *Soitamurt* (E14) worship. Not only are the men and women on opposite sides of the worship space, but also the women are exclusively dressed in traditional attire, the men in western wear.

The previous discussion of PCEA clergy and leader dress conventions comes to bear in explaining this difference. In PCEA Maasai churches, western clothing is often viewed as a mark of the changed life of a Christian. A Maasai man may wear his traditional *ilkarash* (cloth wrap) all week, but put on his western suit for Sunday

worship. In addition, a man's wearing of western style clothing is an unspoken indicator of success. Furthermore, in numerous anecdotal conversations with men, it has been made clear that many Maasai husbands prefer their wives to dress in the traditional manner.

These cultural elements may not be globally unique to Maasai people as other groups may employ similar practices. Nevertheless, the blessing of greetings and leavings, divisions of men and women in public, and wearing traditional dress, are general elements of distinct Maasai cultural expression found in many PCEA congregations in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* mission areas.

### *Comfort in Wearing Maasai Clothing and Beads*

Do Maasai Christians feel free to wear their traditional clothing and ornamentation to services of worship in PCEA churches? Question number eight sought to discern attitudes of worshipers toward this inquiry. In the Maasai language, the observers asked those surveyed, "*Ilakuno tenishop ilkarash o masaa tena anisa?*" *Ilkarash* is a masculine, plural noun that derives its meaning from the verb *arasha*, to smear. As Mol states, this more than likely refers to the spreading of red ochre on the body.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, most *ilkarash* in the study area are large pieces of red-patterned cloth worn by men and women. The reference to *o masaa* (ornaments) does not limit personal ornamentation to beads (*i sean*) alone, but to other items made of leather, bone, wood, and shell as well. In short, *o masaa* is the sum of all male and female personal adornments of the Maasai. Given the aforementioned stringent expectations of PCEA ministers with regard to clerical dress, this question sought to discover to what extent that expectation had been

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<sup>49</sup>Mol, *Maasai Dictionary*, 171.



passed on to worshippers and if they felt they could wear their indigenous clothing to worship services.

Tables 21, 22, and 23 show the results of the surveys for each particular region and table 24 gives a summary view of the three areas combined. On the tables, a ++ indicates the response, *kalakuno oleng* or “I feel very free,” a + signifies *kalakuno/ adim ashopo tenayeu* or “I feel free/ I can wear them if I want,” a \* means the neutral *nusunusu* or “in the middle,” a – refers to *malakuno* or “I am not comfortable,” and - - signifies *malakuno oleng* or “I feel very uncomfortable.”

Table 21. Freedom to Wear Indigenous Clothes and Beads in Worship in the *Olchoronyori* Area

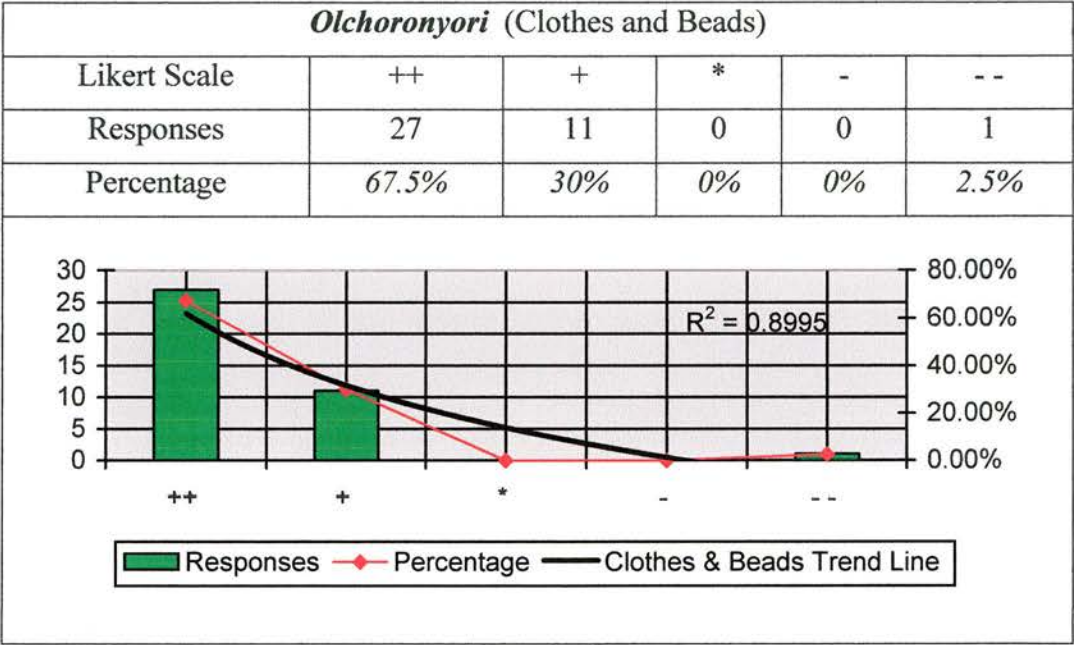


Table 22. Freedom to Wear Indigenous Clothes and Beads in Worship in the *Injashat* Area

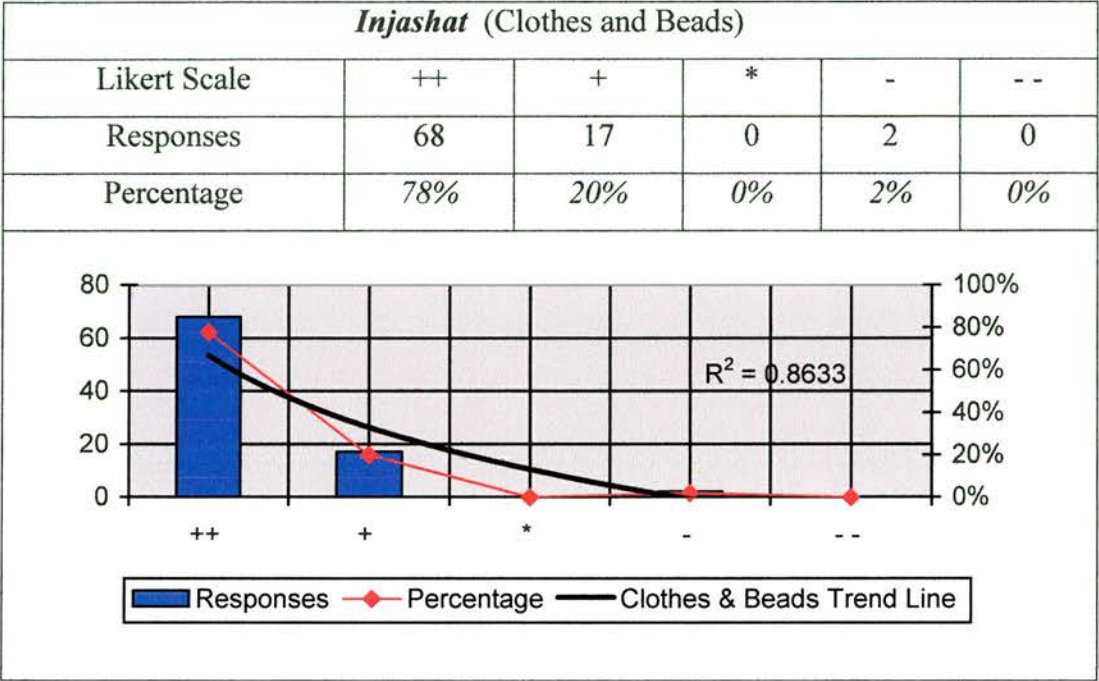


Table 23. Freedom to Wear Indigenous Clothes and Beads in Worship in the *Ewuaso* Area

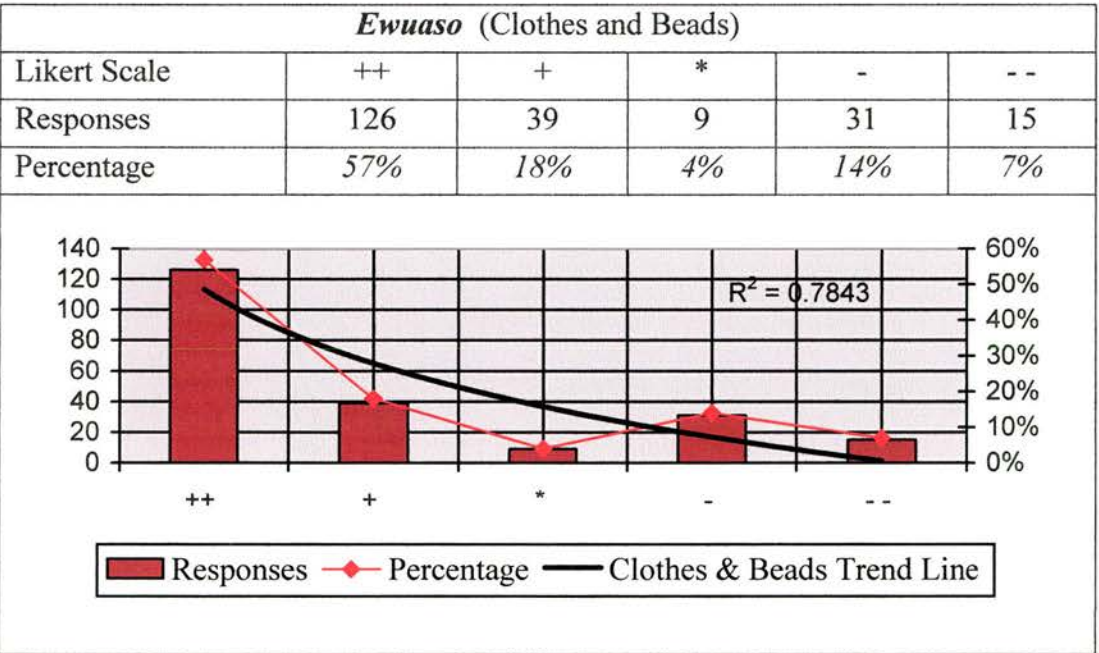
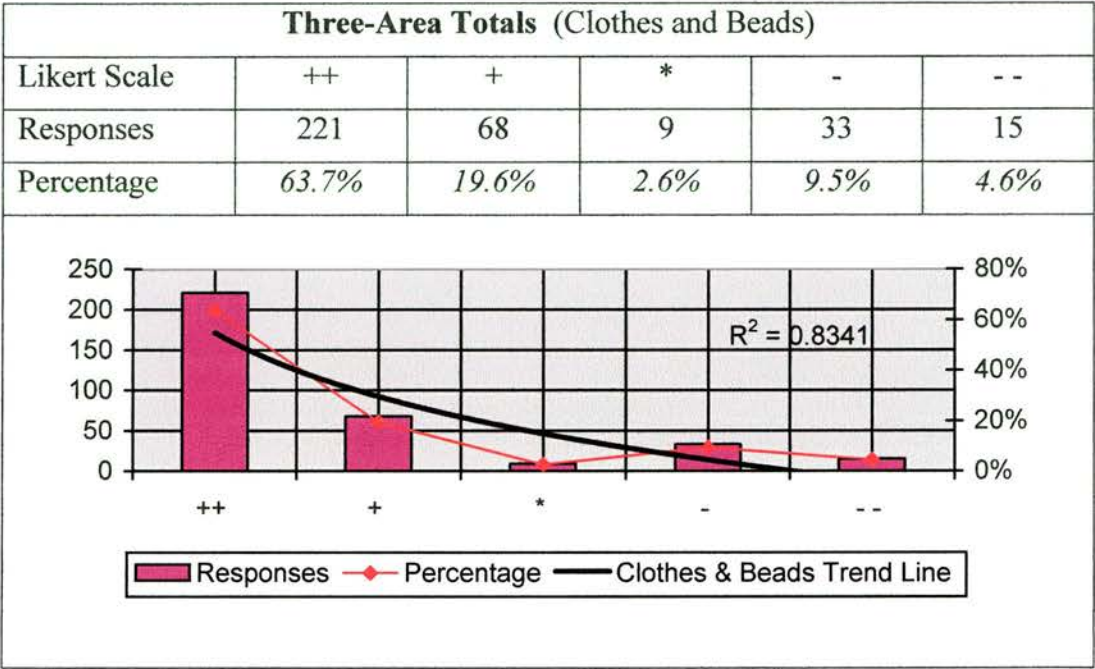


Table 24. Freedom to Wear Indigenous Clothes and Beads in Worship in the Combined *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas



It is clear from the indications of the data that a significant majority of men and women surveyed in the three areas feel either free or very free in wearing their indigenous attire to services of Christian worship. Combining the positive responses, “I am very free” and “I am free” to wear *ilkarash o masaa* if I so desire, offers an insightful picture of the pervasive attitudes across the region: *Olchoronyori* = 97.5%, *Injashat* = 75%, *Ewuaso* = 75%. The trend lines for *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat* are extremely close in value and the three-area trend line follows this overall pattern. The next photographs illustrate the indigenous *inkarash o masaa* (clothes and ornamentation) worn by three women and an older man to actual services of Christian worship.<sup>50</sup> Both recent images, made either directly

<sup>50</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, *WomenAtOretiti.jpeg*, and *E1-OldManInWorship.jpeg*.



after or during a Christian worship service, corroborate the finding that people are feeling free to wear this kind of clothing to church services. It is interesting to note in the photograph of the older man (Fig. 87) that the small children in the background are wearing western outfits. One of these outfits may be a school uniform.



Fig. 86. Traditionally Dressed Maasai Women At *Oreteti* A.I.C. Church.



Fig. 87. Traditionally Dressed Maasai Man in *Najile* Church (E1).

While there appears to be a real sense of freedom to wear Maasai attire, there is also a definite mix of clothing styles present in PCEA worship services in these three mission areas. This is especially apparent in previous images (Fig. 82 “Women and Men at *Olodungoro* (E4) Worship” and Fig. 84 “Women and Men at *Soitamurt* (E14) Worship”) where a mixture of clothing styles may be readily seen.

In the *Ewuaso* area, this mix of dressing styles is a cause of tension as evidence by the difference in responses as compared to the two other mission areas.

An overwhelming majority of those surveyed in *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat*, 97.5% and 98%, respectively, felt “very free” or “free” to wear *inkarash o masaa* in church, while that figure drops to 75% in the *Ewuaso* area. Couple this drop with *Ewuaso*’s 21% who feel either “not free” or “not free at all” to wear *inkarash o masaa* in church and there is some evidence for either a misunderstanding of the question, a significant minority who feel badly about wearing *inkarash o masaa* in church, or a combination of both of these.

An interview with a Maasai woman living in the *Olchoronyori* area who stated she was approximately fifty years in age helps illumine this tension. She asked that her name not be revealed. After a number of years as a Christian and faithful PCEA church member, she was invited to become part of the church’s Women’s Guild, a group of especially devout women who work together in support of various church-related activities. At that time, there was strong persuasion for all members to put off “the old” clothing and take on “the new” as an outward symbol of their dedication and membership. These “new” clothes included a western-style dress or skirt and blouse and a special PCEA headscarf. She recounted how she struggled with this decision, but dutifully took on the new way of dressing and attended worship services the next week as a member of the Women’s Guild. She stated, “For the first time, I felt very sad going to my church that day.”<sup>51</sup> Sometime later, she said she decided to return to her familiar way of dress. There was discussion about removing her from membership, but she was allowed to remain. There are concessions now made in the Women’s Guild, at Kirk Session, and Presbytery meetings for the Maasai to either attend in full western wear or in full

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<sup>51</sup>Interview with confidential informant, 7 October 2001.



traditional dress. The headscarf of the PCEA Women's guild could be added to either traditional or western dress. The photograph below shows a Women's Guild in the *Ewuaso* area offering a song during the Sunday worship service.<sup>52</sup> These women wear their familiar *inkarash o masaa*, but also don the light blue headscarf of the PCEA Women's Guild and wear white plastic shoes.



Fig. 88. Women's Guild Choir at *Soitamurt* (E14).

In their provocative article, "Maasai on the Lawn: Tourist Realism in East Africa," Edward Bruner and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett study the Mayers Ranch, a site which "features Maasai 'tribal' dancing followed by tea and scones on the Mayers' lawn." In their analysis, the Maasai who are employed by the Mayers to play the role of the idealized "noble savage" live in a surrealistic existence that perpetuates the colonial continuation of the Maasai people in this part. When they

<sup>52</sup>E14-WomensGuildChoir.jpeg.

are not performing, the Maasai families may be found in their villages that are built on the Mayers' property and only open for tour during the performance times. During these "off" times, the Maasai may wear a t-shirt or a watch, even listen to the radio, but when the afternoon show-time draws near, the radio goes off and the ochre goes on. The authors go on to state that much of the photography seen by the global community of Maasai people in their traditional clothing and activities was made at the idealized Mayers Ranch.<sup>53</sup>

The enduring colonial legacy, the demands of tourism, and the very real need for money are certainly factors in the way a Maasai person dresses. Equally as forceful, however, is a strong sense of identity with their people group. Ethnologist John Galaty discusses in depth the concept of what it means to be a Maasai. In his definitive essay, "Being 'Maasai,'" Galaty analyses distinct groups of Maasai people and their practices of life; ones who both conform to the idealistic norms presented by Mayers Ranch and those who diverge from it. In so doing, Galaty is readily cognizant of the strong sense of identity among this people. He writes, "For Maasai, the notion of 'Maasai' is a preeminently natural category since it represents an aspect of reality as concrete as geographical features, as biologically distinct as cattle, and as unique in practice as species of wild animals."<sup>54</sup> In many instances, the sense of a person's proud identity with the Maasai people is impetus for uninhibited display of traditional dress, even in the context of the more modern

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<sup>53</sup>Edward Bruner and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Maasai on the Lawn: Tourist Realism in East Africa," *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1994), 435-470.

<sup>54</sup>John G. Galaty, "Being 'Maasai;' Being 'People-of-Cattle:' Ethnic Shifters in East Africa," *American Ethnologist*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1982), 3.

convention of haberdashery that seems to be incumbent upon those operating in the cities and trading areas surrounding *enkop ool Maasai* (the land of the Maasai).

In another sense, clothing choice is often simply a matter of convenience or necessity and is influenced by the activity in which one is engaged. For instance, in the west, a business professional may wear a business suit to his or her office, but at home may change into old slacks and a sweater. Neither is culturally inappropriate in their context. In a similar manner, many Maasai going into *Ngong* on market day or to Nairobi will select trousers and a dress shirt instead of their traditional clothing without thinking about it. Upon return to their village, they may put on *inkarash o masaa*. Translation consultant and project advisor, Moses Sinet Pulei, tells of his school days when he wore his western uniform at and around school, but at his home wore an *olkarasha* (cloth wrap) and carried an *engudi* (herding stick).<sup>55</sup> In attending a service of Christian worship, Maasai living within the survey area will either put on their best beads and colorful cloths or choose a dress or trousers, coat and tie. Most of those interviewed saw this as a matter of putting their best before the Lord, rather than a forced matter of rule. Although specific details were not apprehended through the Worship Observation Report or the Surveys, a certain amount of insight comes from an analysis of the photographic documentation turned in for each congregation. In careful examination of the pictures of the individual congregations at worship, gathered outside of the church meeting place, and in concluding greetings and grace, what is therefore discovered of those in attending worship in PCEA Maasai churches is a blend of dressing styles. Furthermore, churches closer to trading centers and with representation of mixed people groups seem to have

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<sup>55</sup>Interview with Moses Sinet Pulei, 21-23 May 2001.



more congregants dressed in western style than those in more remote locations. For example, the following photographs of those worshiping at *Olepolos* (O4) and *Oseronokyie* (E2) have most people dressed in western style while those attending the service at *Eluaai* (E10) and *Olodungoro* (E4) have a larger number dressed in the traditional manner.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, it appears that men tend to wear western style clothing to services of Christian worship more often than women. This is readily seen in the previous images from *Soitamurt* (E14) and *Sairrashie* (E15).<sup>57</sup> Finally, upon examination of the photographs of the leaders for each particular church, it is apparent that they tend to dress in western style following dress conventions of PCEA leadership mentioned earlier. A representation of these photographs appears earlier in this chapter depicting worship leaders at *Najile* (E1), *Olooseos* (O1), *Kimelok* (E20), *Olepolos* (O4), and *Neson Koyo* (I9), respectively.<sup>58</sup>



Fig. 89. *Olepolos* (O4) Congregation.

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<sup>56</sup>O4-Congregation.jpeg, E2-CongregationWaving.jpeg, E10-UnderTree1.jpeg, E4-CongregationOutside.jpeg.

<sup>57</sup>See Figs. 83 and 84.

<sup>58</sup>See Figs. 59, 62, 64, 65, and 66.



Fig. 90. *Osero-onyokie* (E2) Congregation.



Fig. 91. *Eluaai* (E10) Congregation at Worship.





Fig. 92. Part of the *Olodungoro* (E4) Congregation.

In matters of official PCEA church position with respect to issues of clothing one must consider local Kirk Session, area Presbytery and national General Assembly practices, the influence of the PCEA Women's Guild, and the presence of vestments in PCEA churches. First, the Presbyterian governing body most familiar to the majority of those in PCEA Maasai churches is the Kirk Session in that it is the local representation of the denomination. Up until the late 1980's, the *Olooseos* Kirk Session, which at that time consisted of representatives from the entire geographic region of this study, churches to the south toward Magadi and the Tanzania boarder and churches to the east toward Kajiado, had an unwritten policy regarding proper attire at official meetings. That policy required those laity attending to wear trousers, shirt, tie, and jacket. Clergy were to wear their clerical collars with jacket. In 1989, that policy was modified so that either western attire or traditional dress could be worn. While the requirement was relaxed, the pressure to wear western clothes remained and still governs the attire at judicatory meetings of the Kirk Session and Presbytery. When considering the highest PCEA governing body, the General Assembly, the formal dress and decorum is normative.

Other PCEA affiliated organizations feel the impact of this pressure to wear specialized clothing. A case in particular is the PCEA Women's Guild, whose work was mentioned earlier. The required uniform for members of this group is a special headscarf and, in most cases, western style dress or skirt and blouse. The previous photograph (Fig. 84) of the Women's Guild at *Soitamurt* (E14) shows a concession won by the efforts of area pastor Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi to allow the women to wear traditional dress, but keep the headscarf signifying membership in the group. Even in the *Soitamurt* group has a special uniform outside their traditional outfits. In addition to the headscarves, the majority of the members have specially purchased white plastic shoes. In most other areas of this study, traditional dress is discouraged for Women's Guild members.

As far as clergy vestments are concerned, the PCEA remains formal and western in its style. Ministers mostly wear clerical collars and jackets even in the remotest situations. For sacramental occasions or special rites of the church, they also wear the preaching gown. As far as I am aware, in the other protestant congregations and catholic churches in and around the study area, there are no regularized vestments reflecting Maasai culture.<sup>59</sup>

This case study demonstrates that there exists a mix of dressing styles in the three PCEA Maasai mission areas. In spite of this, there are also indications that

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<sup>59</sup>In a 1992 interview with the late Jack E. Weller, associate executive of Missouri Union Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA), he spoke of hosting a group of PCEA officials in his area that year. In conversation with one Kenyan PCEA official, Weller remarked that his son-in-law worked with the PCEA among the Maasai people to which the pastor replied, "Oh, they still wear sheets." There are few, if any, written policies specifying PCEA dress codes, but peer pressure and expectations to wear western clothes in the conduct of church duties are prevalent.

particular patterns emerge. In the areas that may be considered more geographically remote, traditional dress is still widely practiced, while in areas closer to roads and trading centers, the pattern of dress is a mix of traditional Maasai and western or western dress altogether.<sup>60</sup> Yet, the vast majority of those surveyed indicated they feel free to wear Maasai dress and bead ornamentation to services of Christian worship. It is evident that the influences of colonial dress conventions, patterns of Presbyterian dress formalities, and conventions of modern western dress have served to impact the way Maasai people dress when participating in and leading worship. On the basis of the observation, survey, and photographic data presented, the influence of formal Presbyterianism taught by and witnessed in mission personnel and subsequent East Africa church leadership has been very significant in shaping the Maasai conception of appropriateness in worship attire. A review of the photographs of the worship leaders for each particular church in this study reveals an overwhelming pattern of those who are clothed in western dress.<sup>61</sup> The distinctives of Maasai dress have only rarely been considered in the life of the PCEA and its Maasai congregations.

#### *Desire for Maasai Cultural Expression in Worship*

In survey questions number nine, observers posed the question, “*Iyeu neetai mabaa olkuak lool Maasai tena anisa?*” which may be approximated in the English language, “Do you want there to be occurring expressions of Maasai culture in this

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<sup>60</sup>Refer to Figs. 60 and 61 of the *Najile* congregation (E1), and Fig. 63 of the *Olooseos* (O1) congregation.

<sup>61</sup>See Appedix 1 regarding photographs on the supplemental compact disc. Also, refer to Fig. 59, *Najile* Worship Leaders, Fig. 62, *Olooseos* Worship Leaders, and Fig. 63, *Kimelok* Worship Leaders.

church?” The intent of this query was to ascertain of those questioned their desire for or reticence towards indigenous expressions in Christian worship. Again, in attempting to discover the attitudes of those questioned, the Likert Scale was employed. On the following tables, a ++ indicates the response, *kayieu neetai oleng* or “I want this very much,” a + signifies the response, *kayieu* or “I want it,” a \* means the neutral *meeta kasi* or “It doesn’t matter,” a – refers to the indication, *mayieu* or “I do not want it,” and a - - indicates the response, *mayieu pii* or “I do not want it at all.” Tables 25, 26, and 27 present the data from the individual mission areas and table 28 shows how the data tracked combining all three areas.

Once more, there are some noticeable differences in the survey responses from the three areas. In the *Olchoronyori* area, the distribution of responses is very evenly spread throughout the range. This results in a nearly flat trend line with only a slight rise on the side of desiring cultural expression in worship. *Injashat* has fewer responses in the neutral category and more on the positive side. This results in a trend line with a much more definable tendency toward the desire that worship contain elements of Maasai culture. *Ewuaso* has even fewer giving a neutral response with more on the negative side. The resulting *Ewuaso* table has a trend line skewed toward the negative, practically a mirrored opposite of *Olchoronyori*.

In the three-area summary table (Table 28), the average smoothes out the particular regional skews so that 43.8% responded with either “I want it very much” or “I want it” and 50% responded with either “I do not want it at all” or “I do not want it”. This is a margin of less than 7% between the positive and negative attitudes toward a desire for expressions of Maasai culture to be part of the Christian service of worship. Only 5.5% of all those surveyed gave a neutral response.

Table 25. Desire for Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship  
in the *Olchoronyori* Area

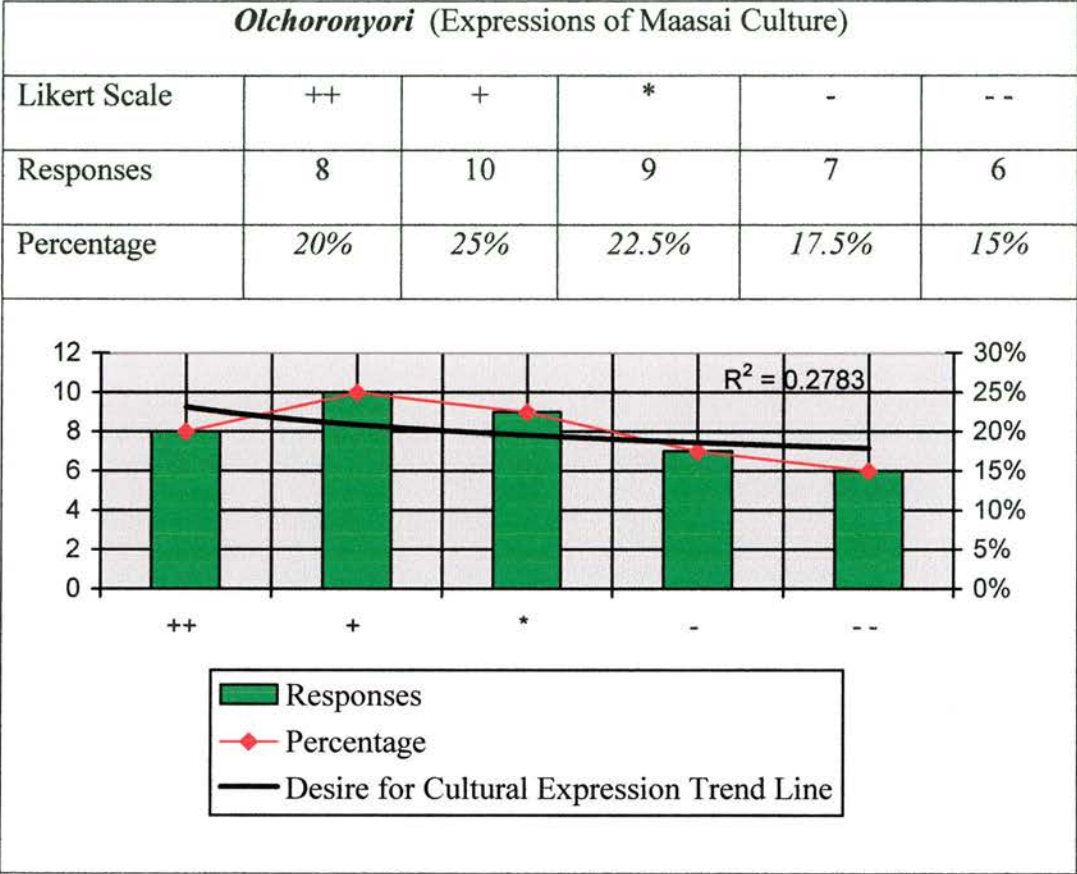




Table 26. Desire for Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship in the *Injashat* Area

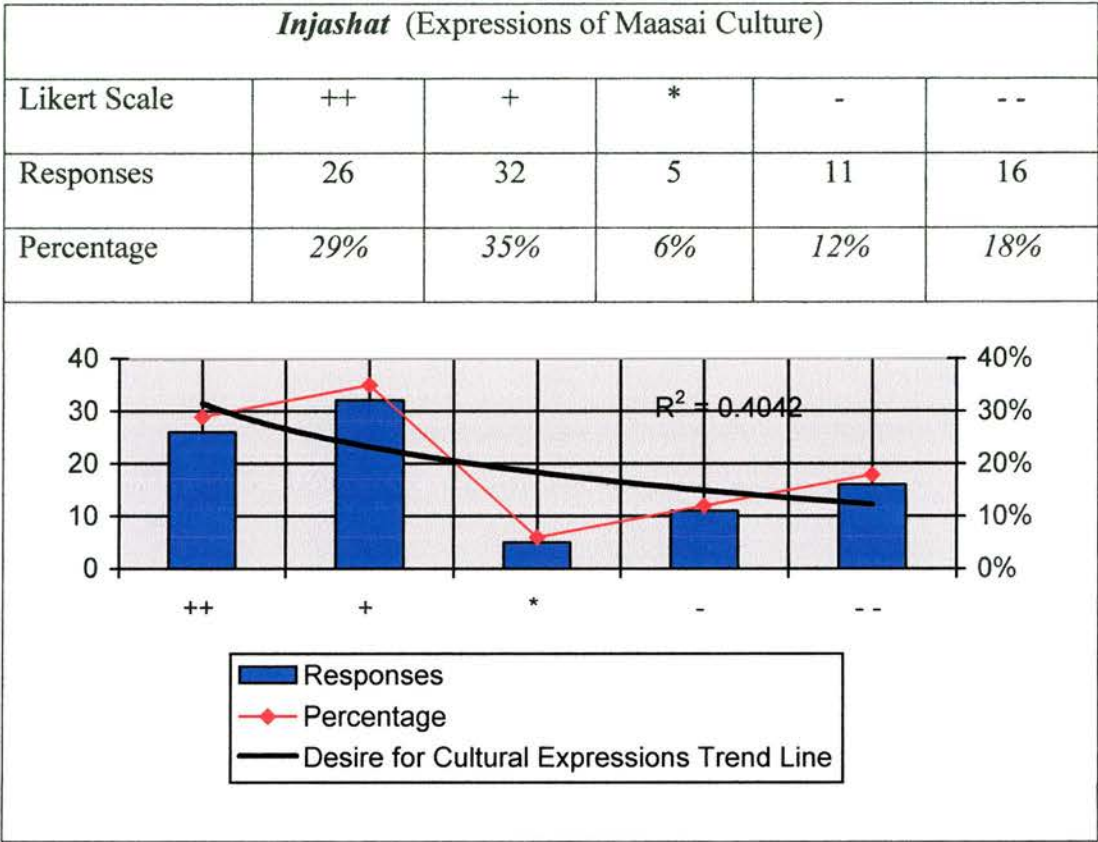


Table 27. Desire for Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship  
in the *Ewuaso* Area

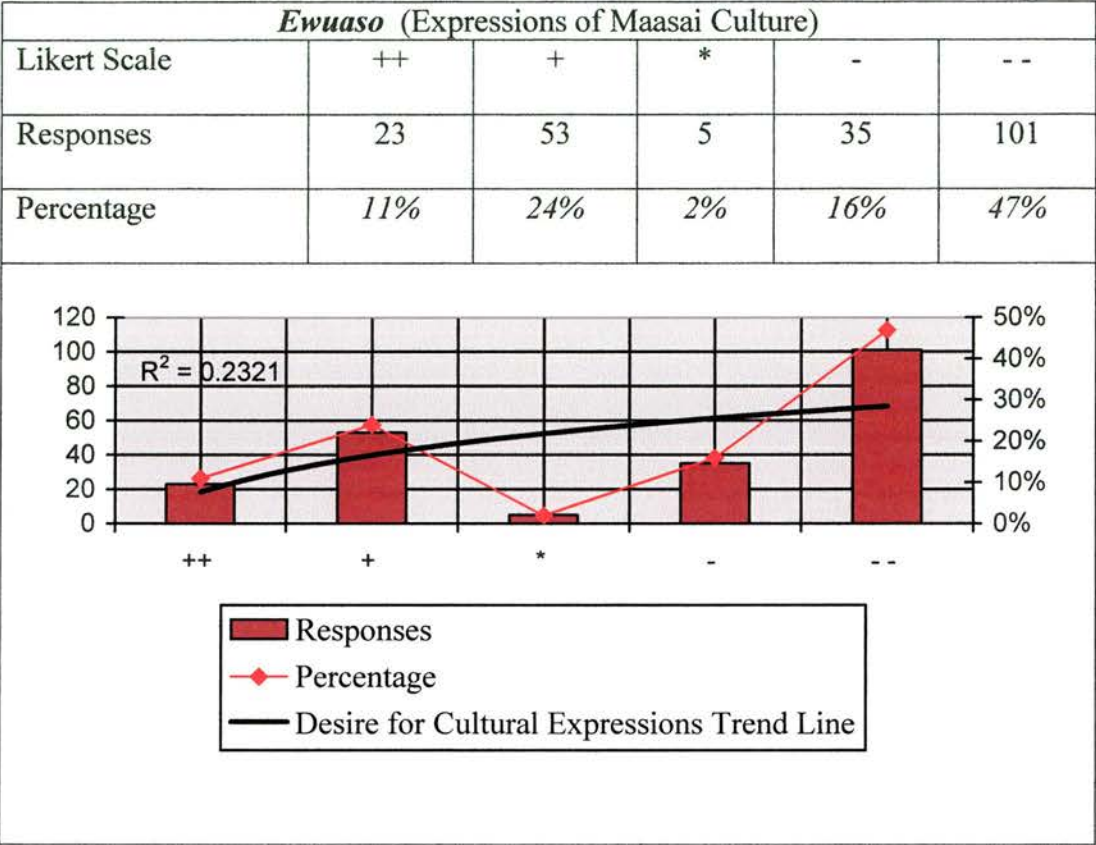
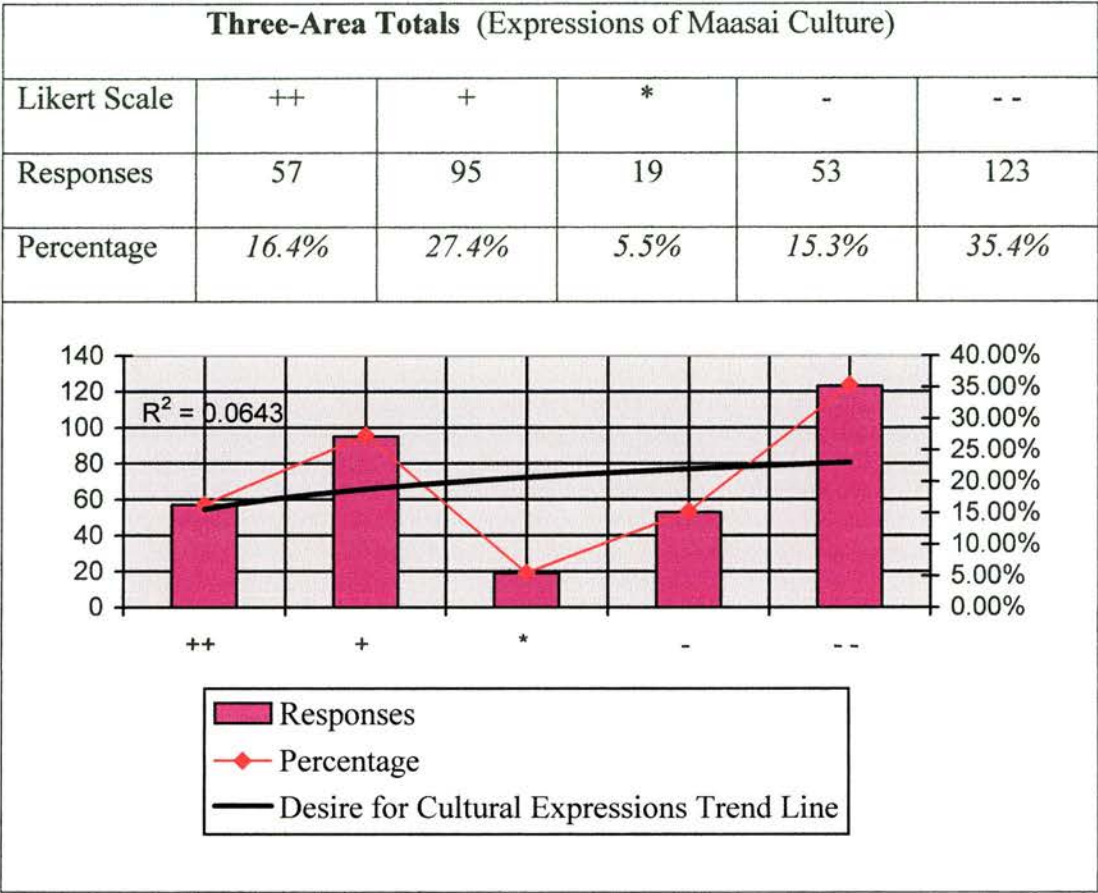


Table 27. Desire for Expressions of Maasai Culture in Worship in the Combined *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* Areas



In one sense, this overall picture may represent the changes in ethnicity among some of these congregations and the influence of a rapidly modernizing Kenya. It is surprising, however, to note the results for the *Ewuaso* area (Table 27). As noted earlier, *Ewuaso* is both the largest and the most geographically remote of the three areas. In comparison with *Olchoronyori* and *Injashat*, *Ewuaso* may be considered the most traditional, meaning simply it contains the most number of Maasai people whose lives are structured around the family village, the practice

keeping animals as a primary means of livelihood, and the continuation of many long-standing rites and ceremonies. In this light, one might readily expect respondents to the survey in *Ewuaso* to desire the incorporation of Maasai cultural uniqueness into services of corporate Christian worship. This was not the case. In the *Ewuaso* area, 47% responded with *mayieu pii*, “I do not want it at all” and 16% said *mayieu*, “I do not want it.” Combining these two negative responses results in a significant majority, 63%, who told their questioners that they do not want there to be Maasai cultural expressions in worship.

Clues to this negative skew in *Ewuaso* and to the variety of responses in the other areas began to emerge as we debriefed the observers upon their return. As the administration of the survey with the men and women asking the questions in the field was discussed, each had the opportunity to express any challenges they experienced with the questionnaire or offer any comments. Many noted that this particular inquiry prompted a counter-question from a number of Maasai participants, “*Olkuak sidai or mesida?*” which means, “Good culture or bad culture?”

To follow up with these concerns, there was an interview with the writer and Benson Kurraru with two of the observers who seemed most articulate and interested in the subject, Francis Sakuda (I2) and Isaac Kipeen (E8).<sup>62</sup> The discussion took place at *Camp Mwamba* over the customary drink of *chai*. The varied responses for this question were presented to the men. It was also disclosed that several observers had volunteered information that there were questions put to them in the field by those being surveyed about cultural practices being considered

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<sup>62</sup>Interview with Issac Kipeen, Francis Sakuda, and Benson Kurraru at *Camp Mwamba*, 30 May 2001.

good or bad. Isaac spoke up saying, “One old woman asked me immediately when I read the question, ‘*olkuak sidai o olkuak torrono*’ (good culture or bad culture)?” The Maasai word *torrono* has a much stronger meaning than *mesidai*. While the opposite of *sidai* is simply *mesidai*, “good or not good,” *torrono* carries a meaning of the extreme. It may be translated “terrible, awful, evil.” Mol confirms this and even remarks that the word may be used in a self-standing form to indicate “a great evil, an evil person” or “a bad act, a sin.”<sup>63</sup>

As discussion continued, Francis brought up specific areas that may have caused confusion, specifically mentioning the traditional cultural practice of female circumcision, animal sacrifices, and the drinking of blood. As noted earlier, the practice of female circumcision is not supported by the PCEA, but it is part of the historic *olkuak lool Maasai*. In his book, *Doing Theology with the Maasai*, Doug Priest examines the issue of animal sacrifice in both the Biblical framework and in the Maasai culture. Priest points to this and other cultural conflicts as ones that have been and continue to be wrestled with both in the academy and on the mission field. He writes,

One day at a Bible instruction course for Maasai evangelists, an old Maasai pastor stood up and drew a line vertically down the middle of a blackboard. He then said, ‘On the left side of the line is Maasai culture; on the right is what is Christian. When you become a Christian you leave the old ways behind.’<sup>64</sup>

In his work, Priest suggests that churches would do well to carefully examine all aspects of a people’s traditions before patently banning anything from their pre-Christian days.

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<sup>63</sup>Mol, *Maasai Dictionary*, 393.

<sup>64</sup>Doug Priest, *Doing Theology with the Maasai*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1990), 3.



We must spend the time it takes to get to know the people well. We must strive to gain an understanding of the realities of their lives in their context. We must be quick to listen, slow to speak. We must be empathetic as well as loving. Such an attitude is not one that is developed overnight or by accident. We must devote ourselves before God to this work for it is a holy task.<sup>65</sup>

As the interview at *Camp Mwamba* continued, Francis suggested that when the question was asked without specific explanation, some may have been confused. After some time, Benson, who had been listening intently, remarked, "There is confusion in the churches as to what customs are fine to have within the churches and which ones are not."<sup>66</sup> A follow-up question was asked to the men, "Has there ever been any training or guidance from the PCEA for you on this subject?" All shook their heads indicating there had not been any. Again, Benson remarked, "No, but we need this teaching."<sup>67</sup> From this interview, it appeared that the issue of *olkuak* was confusing for many Maasai Christians. This became more apparent in the ensuing focus group discussions.

In some areas, and most especially in the more traditional *Ewuaso* region, there may be a depth of understanding and spiritual maturity that allows for the realization of positive and negative elements of culture in light of Christian teachings. The Maasai people's struggle with issues of culture is not only a Sunday event, but it is a daily issue.

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<sup>65</sup>Priest, *Doing Theology*, 209.

<sup>66</sup>Interview with Issac Kipeen, Francis Sakuda, and Benson Kurraru at *Camp Mwamba*, 30 May 2001.

<sup>67</sup>Interview with Issac Kipeen, Francis Sakuda, and Benson Kurraru at *Camp Mwamba*, 30 May 2001.

Maasai Focus Group Discussions of Worship and Worship Leader Training

In the attempt to bring a convergence of resources to bear on the research question and to be faithful to the PRA methodology of involving the local communities in the evaluation process, a focus group discussion forum was held 31 May–2 June 2001 at *Camp Mwamba*. All of the PCEA evangelists or lay leaders from each of the thirty-five churches involved in the study were invited to attend. The transportation costs, meals, and housing arrangements for each participant were paid. Twenty-nine evangelists and several others attended this event which resulted in having representatives from thirty-three of the thirty-five churches (94%). In addition, approximately fifteen other PCEA and MCYF members attended for at least part of the dialogue.

At the time of this study, there were thirty-two evangelists working in the thirty-five churches of these three-mission areas. Two of these evangelists served two churches each. The remaining church, *Kimuka* (I5), was without an assigned evangelist during the time of this case study. During the course of the focus group event, twenty-nine evangelists were interviewed. For two unable to attend and be personally interviewed, Pastor Stephen supplied information regarding their work in the mission area over which he held charge. The long-established *Kimuka* church (I5) had no representative and a representative from *Olgumi* (E9) was unable to be present. It was reported that *Kimuka* had recently lost their evangelist and had not yet found a replacement. There was an additional evangelist, Samuel OleKishine, in attendance from a new church development project, *Oldepe*, located on a remote bush track on the way to *Moisiro*. Because this church was previously unknown, it

was not part of the PRA, but because of his interest, OleKishine attended the focus group session.

During the personal interview time with each evangelist, the initial findings of the survey data for their particular congregation were presented, several predetermined questions were asked, there was an invitation for their free-form comments, and a concluding prayer.<sup>68</sup> Next, as the whole group met together, several points emerged from the PRA Worship Observation Reports and Surveys as topics of interest.<sup>69</sup> The large group was then broken down into five smaller focus groups consisting of five to seven persons with at least one person representing each of the mission areas. These groups discussed the highlighted points and other questions relating to worship and worship leader training.

#### *Focus Group: Question One*

The first Focus Group question asked the groups to discuss and come up with a list of five needs for ministry in the PCEA churches located in these three mission areas. They were to rank these needs from greatest to least on a scale of five to one. Upon reconvening, it was determined that the top need emerging from their individual group discussions was the need for constructing new churches and renovating and improving existing church buildings. The participants noted that the *Ewuaso* area had a large number of congregations meeting outdoors which impacted

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<sup>68</sup>For purposes of clarity in the writer's translations, Benson Kurraru was present during the personal interview periods.

<sup>69</sup>The points of consensus are listed in the responses to the individual focus group questions. Interests ranged from the captivating question of good culture versus bad culture to the desire for Biblical guidance on current issues in congregational worship such as speaking in tongues and miraculous works of the Holy Spirit's power.

their ability to gather in very hot weather and during the heavy rain period. As part of the discussion on this topic, others observed that the expansion of churches in that area had been rapid and numerous such that the ability to build structures had yet to catch up with the growth of the number of congregations. Some discussed the matter of a number of older church buildings in need of repair and some in need of expansion to hold the increasing number of participants, especially in the area of children's Sunday school.

Coming in a close second in the rankings was the need for training of the evangelists. In order to offer Christian nurture and instruction to those already in attendance and to increase their ability to gain new converts, there was agreement that additional training was necessary. There ensued a lively discussion of the perceived failures of the PCEA in offering the needed evangelist training programs. Several of the evangelists stated that they had received a brief few days of training, but felt that the amount and depth was inadequate for the tasks they were called upon to do in their churches.

The perception of an inadequately trained corps of evangelists is justified when further considering the actual training of each evangelist. In the individual interviews with the evangelists, one question asked of each person was, "Did you receive any training to be an evangelist? If so, where and when did you receive it?" Of the twenty-nine evangelists interviewed, only two had attended the official one year PCEA training course to equip evangelists. In 1985, Peter Sakuda (I3) and Josphat Nagirro (I4) traveled to *Limuru*, spent the year at the PCEA Pastoral Institute, and received a certificate and commissioning to designate them PCEA evangelists. These two men are the age to be considered senior elders and have

great respect in all three mission areas as they often travel in evangelistic efforts. In addition to Sakuda and Nagirro, there were five of those interviewed, Simon Kirrau (O2), Joseph Tumanka (E2), Daniel oLokeri (E16), Tomas Leposo (E21), John Teka (E22), who stated that they had attended a 1998 PCEA sanctioned four-day seminar at the Pastoral Institute at its new location on the campus of the historic Kikuyu Mission Station. In all, seven evangelists had received some training directly from the PCEA. There were fourteen indicating that they had attended the “*Enkomono loo Evangelists*” conducted by the author in 1988-89. The “*Enkomono loo Evangelists*” was a series of five, three-day training sessions spread over a two-year period. Of those fourteen, two had also attended the entire year course in *Limuru* and two the four-day course in Kikuyu, leaving ten for whom the *Enkomono* was their only training. Finally, five reported that they had received training in a two-day seminar given by Pastor Stephen Mparinkoi at *Camp Mwamba* in 1996. Of those five, two had also participated in the four-day course at *Limuru*. Thirteen of the thirty-two (41%) currently serving in the role of evangelist indicated that they had no training whatsoever. Disregarding, for the moment, the duration or quality of the training, this study indicates that 59% have had some sort of training to do the work of an evangelist in Maasai PCEA churches while 41% have not had any training at all. When duration and quality are considered, it is clear that PCEA Maasai evangelists are inadequately equipped for their work.

It is also evident through these self-reported records of participation that there was some training for some of the evangelists. Nevertheless, the amount of training for these evangelists has been insufficient. It is unreasonable to expect a person to be adequately prepared to lead a congregation with only a few days of



instruction. This is an especially poignant fact when one considers that most of the evangelists have a minimum amount of schooling. Only two PCEA evangelists have had any substantial training. The remainder have had only a few days here and there, if any at all.

The evangelists are keen to have proper training. In both individual interviews and in the whole group discussion of this point, the frustration of the evangelists over their feeling unprepared to do their work effectively was mentioned numerous times. Jeremiah Tumunka, evangelist at the *Saikeri* church (I7) said, "I have been at *Saikeri* church for about nineteen years. The only training I ever had was the '*enkomono loo evangelists*' at *Olooseos* in 1988-89. This helped all our Maasai evangelists and I would like to see more training begin again."<sup>70</sup> Of the twenty-nine evangelists interviewed, eleven (38%) stated specifically that their greatest need was for more training. In addition, seven other evangelists said that their needs were those mentioned in the focus group discussions so they did not need to elaborate further. The consensus of the focus groups ranked the second greatest need of the three mission areas as evangelist training. Combining those who specifically stated the need for training with those who affirmed it through their acknowledgement of the consensus of focus group arrives at a significantly high percentage of evangelists wanting training to better do their jobs as worship leaders.<sup>71</sup>

The absence of program or effort to equip PCEA Maasai evangelists to do their job is a marked failure. Not only is there a dearth of Biblical and theological

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<sup>70</sup>Interview with Jeremiah Tumunka at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

<sup>71</sup>The subject of leadership training will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

guidance, but Maasai cultural values are also ignored. In traditional Maasai culture, the process of growing, learning, and maturing into life roles is an integral part of the society. From the youngest of ages, boys and girls are encouraged to view elders and honored women as role models. In the case of male children, even prior to this, young boys look forward to the day when they will pass on to become warriors. When they are warriors, certain elders in the clan meet with the warriors to give instruction in the ways of Maasai life. When these warriors become junior elders (*olngesher*), they are confident in their new role because they have been trained and mentored for such a time.

In PCEA church life then, it is no wonder that surprise, frustration, and even anger meets the obvious lack of equipping and mentoring conducted for Maasai church workers. No Maasai would be expected to preside as an elder over the clan without extensive preparation. It is with disbelief that the Maasai evangelists find themselves presiding over congregations with little or no preparation. This anomaly flies in the face of Maasai culture and certainly indicates insensitivity to the distinctive of properly equipping men and women to do the tasks given to them with skill and confidence.

#### *Focus Group: Question Two*

At the conclusion of the discussions about greatest ministry needs, a second focus group question was posited, "In thinking of an evangelist's training program, list five topics or subject areas that most need to be addressed." Again, the groups were instructed to rank these in order from most to least important. As an open-ended question, the responses were many and varied. Nevertheless, there were several areas which drew a consensus. Two of the focus groups noted that learning

how to study the Bible was a very important topic to include in a training program and two groups considered training to know how to discern false teachers, prophets, and spirits as important. Three groups came back with a desire to learn how to know the difference between a testimony and preaching. Four groups were in agreement, the most touching any single topic, that there needed to be training on the relationship between Christian culture and human culture.

As the focus groups reported one to another, the topic that captivated everyone's attention was the discussion of *olkuak* (culture). The discussion was very animated. The gist of the matter was that the evangelists were concerned that there was no PCEA training nor definitive pastoral guidance available for them on this subject. They were clearly in agreement that if the Bible was explicit or obviously implicit in prohibiting any activity, that it should not be allowed in their practice of Christian worship. They expressed a desire to have some teaching on the matter and how to discern these matters relating to culture so that they might guide their churches.

In several one-to-one interviews, this topic came up. Samuel Matura, evangelist for *Ole Ntoko* (E3) said,

I want to know more about Maasai traditions. Which ones are good and which ones are bad. I know some of the culture of the Maasai is welcomed in the church and some is not. We need a training on how to be leaders in this idea in our worship.<sup>72</sup>

Ernest Sumok of *Enajooli* church (E5) stated,

One of the main things we have confusion about is how our Maasai culture fits into Christian culture. We need training about this. For example, when a Christian woman is forced to marry a non-Christian man and he forces her to do traditional things, what should be done?<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Interview with Samuel Matura at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

<sup>73</sup>Interview with Ernest Sumok at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001.

These comments, both from evangelists in the *Ewuaso* area, reflect the responses in table 27 dealing with expressions of Maasai culture in worship.

The only guidance given these Maasai evangelists has been the often implied and sometime voiced opinion of various church officials that traditional Maasai culture is at best backward, and at worst an abomination to God. One of the important contributions of the focus groups to the evaluative process of this case study was their affirmation of the essential worth of being a Maasai and a Christian. Time and time again during the days spent with these men and women there were assertions of God's good creation that included Maasai people. After twenty years of working with Maasai people, this was the most forceful insistence of the uniqueness of Maasai Christianity that I had heard.

On many previous occasions over many years, conversations and even larger group gatherings have given in to the prevailing denominational subtlety that devalued Maasai people. In this gathering of the PCEA Maasai evangelists, the first all-evangelist assembly in many years, I clearly heard a consensus that the distinctives of Maasai culture were of value, even in the Christian church. These Christian men and women realized, some perhaps for the first time, that everything distinctly Maasai was not evil. On the contrary, there was a real sense of understanding in the many conversations over the days together that some customs were not appropriate in Christian worship, but that many were. The knowledge that one could be a Maasai and be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ was an emancipating experience. The evening worship organized by the evangelists on the second night was poignantly expressive of Maasai culture with a lengthy jumping,

dancing, and singing session that seemed to move the participants into a spiritual state of awe and worship before God.<sup>74</sup>

*Focus Group: Question Three*

The third and final questions for the consideration of the small groups turned attention again to training, “List three characteristics of a training program for evangelists that you think are most important.” Returning to the whole group for debriefing, the participants listed their overall top three characteristics for an equipping event as 1) allowances for transport to the training site, 2) provision of training materials, and 3) adequate and pleasing food to eat while there. In addition to these, there were concerns over having enough time for the training, securing qualified and respected teachers to lead, and selecting a training location convenient to those in the three mission areas.

The top three concerns listed reveal the difficult economic situation of these men and women and the inattentiveness to this particular aspect of Maasai culture in these regions. The great majority of the PCEA Maasai evangelists are volunteers and receive neither stipend nor any expense allowances for the conduct of their work. The evangelists often have to pay their own transport, and sometimes even provide their own meals and housing.

In traditional Maasai culture, those in certain positions receive special compensations. Again, an example from the Maasai warriors highlights this distinctive. As the warriors go from village to village, they are often given a cow or several goats and sheep to take with them to their *emanyata* (warrior’s village) to

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<sup>74</sup>Traditionally, at the *eunoto* passage ceremony, warriors will often jump, dance to the point of ecstatic transcendence marking the importance of the event.



roast and eat. In another example, about five years after the *olgnesh* ceremony, elders go through a simple passage called *olorika* (stool, referring to the low wooded stools on which elders sit when they are together) which confers upon them the role of a venerated elder. At *olorika* the elders receive a special blanket and stool. These examples show why Maasai evangelists, several of whom have been warriors, may consider it odd to attend a training event and not receive anything. The primary concern in focus question number three was discovering the evangelist's desired elements for inclusion in a worship leader training program.

Throughout the focus group gathering, there was also ample time for fellowship activities, eating meals together, and worship. At the conclusion of the event, the evangelists departed for their home areas with practically each one saying, "*Ashe oleng tenaraki tenkomono. Ashipa aewuo.*" (Thank you for this fellowship. I am happy I came.) It was very evident by the enthusiastic participation, spirited and insightful discussions, and the many verbal acknowledgements of thanks that these evangelists felt part of the evaluative process of the PRA case study.

### *Case Study Conclusions*

As far as can be ascertained, the present case study of the PCEA Maasai churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* areas is the only one of its kind ever conducted. In this chapter, the data presented and analysis offered address many issues raised by the research question of this thesis, "To what extent and in what ways has the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa taken into account the distinctives of Maasai culture?"

The similarities and differences observed in the particular outreach areas show the existence of both the traditional stability of Maasai life and the dynamic tensions of changing demographic make-up that make church work in these regions even more challenging. Even so, solid attendance at PCEA Maasai worship services was normative as was growth in the number of congregations. Many of these new congregations are in *Ewuaso*, situated in close proximity to villages for ease of walking to and from the services, and many were without permanent structures. Attendance at the historic *Olooseos* (O1) congregation is high with a new spirit of revival reported by the evangelists, a very active and well attended children's program, and a larger stone building, next to the original church, under construction.<sup>75</sup> Overall, churches in all three outreach areas seem healthy with a very positive reporting of worship satisfaction among those attending.

The photographic documentation for each congregation provides a wealth of information for this thesis as well as for future researchers. In the case of this worship study, these photographs reveal the continued influence of formal PCEA dress influences as well as the wearing of traditional Maasai dress to worship or as a choir uniform.<sup>76</sup> In addition, the synthesis of distinct traditional elements into Maasai Christian worship was documented by the field observers through photography. These include the exiting of the service, receiving of the traditional

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<sup>75</sup>Interview with Stephen Kashonka at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001. See also Fig. 62, a photograph of *Olooseos* worship leaders with new church building in the background, O1-leaders.jpeg.

<sup>76</sup>See Figs. 62, 64, and 65 of worship leaders. See Figs. 60, 61, and 82 of congregation and choirs in traditional dress.

greeting and blessing, and formation of a fellowship circle, and the saying of the *emunyani* (grace) outside the church structure.<sup>77</sup>

Another point revealed that in most PCEA Maasai congregations there remains a blanket reproduction of formal liturgical practices. In the 2002 follow-up visitation, the writer was invited to deliver the sermon at Kimuka (15). Meeting with the lay worship leaders for the day, these men and women outlined a service nearly identical to ones in western Presbyterian churches—an opening prayer, hymn, prayer of confession, choir singing, more prayer, another hymn, the reading of the Gospel, preaching, receiving the offering with more choir music, then more congregational hymn singing, and finally the concluding worship events as described earlier. While there are many churches operating with formal and even foreign liturgies, the data from this case study also reveals that there are significant changes being instigated by Maasai participants and worship leaders that reflect more culturally appropriate styles in worship. The new emphasis on *indungetta* (praise songs) and the widespread reports of very active participation by worshipers through traditional expression such as jumping, dancing, swaying, and shouting are examples. The majority response of high general satisfaction with worship does not negate the clear confusion by leaders and congregants alike over the issues of traditional culture in relation to Christian faith. Integration or prohibition of these cultural elements will be issues PCEA Maasai churches deal with for some time to come. The integration of *indungetta* (praise songs) and traditional forms of physical participation in worship certainly are customs that they deem as good culture and make the church feel more familiar to Maasai people.

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<sup>77</sup>See Fig. 61 (exiting), Figs. 80 and 81 (blessings and greetings), Figs. 79 and 92 (fellowship circle and grace).

In the subject area of worship leadership training, the record is abysmal. There has been very little effort to respond to the enormous need for trained leadership in the congregations represented in this study. In the past decade, the offering of a few, brief, and culturally insensitive denominationally sanctioned training programs have not proved to be effectual in equipping Maasai lay evangelists. Because of the little support they have received, the Maasai evangelists are beginning to look to themselves and their own resources for the training and encouragement they need. The *enkomono loo tomon are* (fellowship of the twelve) and the seminars sponsored by Pastor Stephen at *Camp Mwamba* are examples.

In this chapter, both areas of consideration and insensitivity to Maasai cultural distinctions were brought to light. When taken as a whole, it is clear that there has been very little thought given these unique Maasai cultural distinctions in the practice of Christian worship and the training of Maasai Christian worship leaders in PCEA churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* areas. Furthermore, the ways in which particular Maasai cultural values found expression occurred, not because of denominational concern or encouragement, but as grass-root efforts by PCEA study area congregations and indigenous lay leaders.

## CHAPTER SIX

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE MAASAI WORSHIP CASE STUDY

As a result of this case study, the foregoing chapter demonstrates some of the ways and to what extent the distinctives of Maasai culture are embraced and ignored in Christian worship and worship leader development in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* mission areas. The implications for Maasai Christian worship and worship leader training are now considered including suggestions which arise from this study. Concluding the thesis, worship, viewed as the heart of church and exemplified in the passion of Maasai Christians, is portrayed as that to be fully embraced through inculturation by Christian worshipers and worship leaders of different cultures.

#### *Implications for Maasai Worship and the Training of Maasai Worship Leaders*

##### *The Making of a Separatist Maasai Church*

In recent years, scholars have noticed a shift in normative Christian practice away from western culture to the younger churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.<sup>1</sup> Historian Philip Jenkins writes provocatively affirming that Christianity in these areas will leave an indelible imprint on the next century.

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<sup>1</sup>See: Andrew F. Walls, "From Christendom to World Christianity: Missions and the Demographic Transformation of the Church," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, vol. 22, no. 3 (2001), 323.



Christianity as a whole is both growing and mutating in ways that observers in the West tend not to see. For obvious reasons, news reports today are filled with material about the influence of a resurgent and sometimes angry Islam. But in its variety and vitality, in its global reach, in its association with the world's fastest-growing societies, in its shifting centers of gravity, in the way its values and practices vary from place to place—in these and other ways it is Christianity that will leave the deepest mark on the twenty-first century.<sup>2</sup>

Western worship in reformed tradition styles may very well continue in the west, but increasingly, the younger churches in the south and east are making their distinctive mark on Christianity and Christian worship for their culture and ultimately, if these shifting trends continue, for Christians throughout the world.

The concept of Christianity's ability to cross cultural boundaries and transform itself into the likeness of a receptor culture has been discussed by respected authors such as Andrew Walls as the indiginization principle.<sup>3</sup> In situations such as those found in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa Maasai churches in this study, it is helpful to note this principle. Because of their stalwart insistence upon keeping the aspects of their cultural heritage intact, PCEA Maasai Christians may be forming a Maasai church in this new century that will be more uniquely African than it is today.

Certainly marks of not only a unique church, but a distinct entity that may be called a church within a church are appearing among the PCEA Maasai churches in the three mission areas studied. Although one cannot assert that there is an ecclesiastically official separation of these Maasai churches from the PCEA, in

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<sup>2</sup>Philip Jenkins, "The Next Christianity," *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2002, 54.

<sup>3</sup>Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 7.

actuality they operate in many respects as a loose consortium of independent churches. In earlier reference, citation of a 1980 work and the anecdotal evidences from the 1990's offered insight that there was a potential for schism among PCEA Maasai churches.<sup>4</sup> An analysis of the data gathered in this study indicates that these Maasai congregations are, in most accounts, operating independently. Exceptions to this movement of independence are the strong support for the PCEA Women's Guild among Maasai congregations in the study area and Pastor Stephen's unwavering support and participation in higher church judicatories.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, this trend toward Maasai church detachment is revealed by considering the information gathered pertaining to leadership training and recognition, mission area designation and finance, the Maasai Rural Development Centre project, and perception of Maasai people's waning position within the PCEA.

The interviews with the PCEA Maasai evangelists demonstrate that there is inadequate training through the PCEA system to actually equip Maasai church workers for their roles in ministering to a local community.<sup>6</sup> The discussions in the focus groups and the strong sentiments of Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi indicate leadership training as a critical need for successful ministry in these Maasai areas. This insufficiency in training and strongly held opinion that it is vitally necessary

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<sup>4</sup>See page 130-132 of this thesis and Fairman, "Maasai Evangelism," 81-99 and 139-163. Also, it is pertinent that Pastor Stephen Mparinkoi has served as the Clerk of the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery for numerous years.

<sup>5</sup>See Fig. 88, Women's Guild at *Soitamurt* (E14). Of special interest in this photograph is the amalgamation of traditional attire with the official head scarf of the PCEA Women's Guild organization.

<sup>6</sup>See pages 276-280 of this thesis.

has led to independent formation of training forums. In cooperation with the Maasai Christian Youth Fellowship, a non-governmental organization (NGO), the local pastor and area evangelists held their own training event in 1996. At that time, regional gatherings were instituted where Maasai evangelists would regularly meet together for mutual support, prayer, and study. The *enkomono loo tomon are* (fellowship of the twelve) also formed and commences both their gatherings and their mission outreach activities completely independent of the PCEA.

Another factor illustrating the independence of Maasai churches in these areas is their separation as mission areas. The connectional system inherent to Presbyterianism is no longer a viable reality for Maasai churches in this study. Prior to separation into geographical mission areas, all the congregations in this study were part of the work of the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery. As such, the Maasai churches had elected representatives from the Kirk Session that attended the regular meetings of the Presbytery. By being designated as a mission area, jurisdiction now falls to the PCEA Nairobi headquarters' division for outreach and projects rather than the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery. Practically speaking, the Maasai congregations now have little to no relationship with higher church governing bodies.

Further indication of separation appears when considering the financial impact of this mission area division. The *Ngong Hills* Presbytery includes in its membership the congregations in Nairobi and its environs. Many city congregations, such as St. Andrews, have financial resources unattainable by the remote Maasai congregations. Although PCEA Maasai churches, because they are mission areas, pay less per-capita apportionment to the PCEA head office, the

removal of churches with financial resources from ecclesiastical partnership with Maasai churches has fiscally crippled the region, exacerbating the rift between Maasai Christians and other PCEA members. The communal responsibility and financial resources of the Presbytery that once included both Maasai Christians and urban and suburban Christians has shifted to the organizational structure in the PCEA denominational office.

In another situation, the PCEA further separated itself from its Maasai churches in discontinuing its involvement in the project at *Olooseos*. Regardless of how the Maasai Rural Development Centre (MRDC) was run, and whether or not the work of the PCEA at *Olooseos* was deemed effective or successful, the very presence of PCEA operation and interest in the project placed the denomination physically in and near the areas where their Maasai congregations were established. Occasionally, PCEA officials visited the site. Often western Presbyterian visitors and short-term mission teams stopped by or conducted small projects. MRDC reports were part of the work of the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery. Plans and regular ventures into un-evangelized areas used MRDC as a starting point. These things gave the perception of PCEA interest and concern for Maasai ministry. With the transfer of the project to the African Institute for Scientific Research and Development (AISRED), PCEA presence in the region has visibly and radically altered and perceptions have changed. One Maasai living near the MRDC who said, "The PCEA, they abandoned us," summarizes the sense of desertion felt in the local

areas around *Olooseos*.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, even in choices of personal dress and living, there exists a stigma associated with Maasai Christians because many choose to look and live differently. Though the elements of western culture have been present in East Africa for little more than a century and embraced by indigenous PCEA leadership for a far shorter period, many PCEA Maasai Christians, who are not westernized and modernized by choice or situation, are maligned by other African church leaders as being backward and inferior.

In these ways, one can see the possible making of a separatist Maasai church. Currently, the churches in this study are by name and tradition associated with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, but seem to be essentially operating on their own. Specific implications arising from this study may assist in discerning ways and means to address this critical issue of church unity.

#### *Appropriate Leadership Selection*

The continued growth in existing PCEA Maasai churches and the constant establishment of new congregations emphasizes the critical need for an expanding base of trained church leaders. The need for Maasai church leaders has not been adequately addressed by the PCEA. There are many factors surrounding this issue complicated by the fact that those in the PCEA denominational hierarchy are

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<sup>7</sup>Interview with Stephen Kashonga at *Camp Mwamba*, 1 June 2001. Further complications have arisen as revealed in anecdotal evidence received in both e-mail from and telephone conversations with trusted Maasai, 22 October 2003. There appears to be a serious conflict with the MCYF group and the PCEA leaders over the actions of a para-church organization's American missionary stationed at Kikuyu and conducting projects in Maasai areas. The details of this conflict are not able to be corroborated or investigated at this time, however, the result has been an exacerbation of the growing rift between Maasai people and the denomination.



predominately Kikuyu. Conflicts arising from tribalism, even within the church, often exacerbate any challenge into an insurmountable problem. Consider two: money issues and qualification standards.

One key issue is simply that of money. There is not enough. The income received by the PCEA Nairobi head office is reported to be hardly sufficient to meet the expenses of paying the upkeep of buildings, missions, vehicles, and paying the ordained clergy and official evangelists. The addition of more staff paid from the coffers of the national church was unthinkable.<sup>8</sup> In 1988, a proposal was placed before the *Ngong Hills* Presbytery regarding funding for Maasai evangelists. At that time, the three mission areas of this study, in addition to other areas stretching southward to Magadi and southeast to Ambolesi and the Tanzanian boarder, were considered under the jurisdiction of this geographic governing body of the PCEA. The proposal, co-authored by Maasai pastor, Rev. Samuel Pulei, asked the churches of the Presbytery to commit a small monthly amount to fund the training and placement of a number of evangelists in these remote areas. The proposal failed. At the present time, most of the PCEA Maasai churches are part of the three designated mission areas of this study. The salary of the Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi and the small stipends for three evangelists, one for each area, are reported to come from the PCEA Nairobi headquarters.<sup>9</sup> It is also reported that the churches in PCEA mission areas have a lower amount charged for per capita assessment payments to the PCEA

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<sup>8</sup>In my visit to PCEA Headquarters, 5 June 2001, I spoke with the bookkeepers in the finance department while waiting to see the moderator. Although I was not privy to the perusal of financial records, it was reported that there was barely enough money to go around as it currently stood. More staff, especially Maasai evangelists, was out of the question.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with PCEA Moderator The Rt. Rev. Jesse Kimau at Jitemega House, PCEA Headquarters, Nairobi, 5 June 2001.

national work effort and that these churches may use any additional funds they raise for the support of their own church program.<sup>10</sup> This PCEA policy has not resulted in an increase in the number of church workers.

Many PCEA churches outside Maasai areas have resources and many members of these congregations have incomes from jobs. The thirty-five Maasai churches observed in this study are situated in areas with few or no resources and draw from a constituency largely without jobs. So, without even arriving at the issue of leadership selection, the entire subject of additional PCEA paid Maasai leaders is practically a mute point.

A second important area of concern is the issue of qualification standards for church leaders. In the few instances when Maasai leadership selection has come before the Presbytery, there exist standards that are incongruent with lives and experience of Maasai people. In order for a person to attend the Pastoral Institute, the PCEA training arm for clergy located at Kikuyu, a successful candidate must have a high level of academic achievement. Although reported slightly flexible, the requirement for entry remains secondary school completion for those training for the ordained ministry and primary school completion for local evangelists.<sup>11</sup> Because secondary schools in many Maasai areas have only recently been established, there has not existed a large pool of Maasai candidates who qualify for PCEA clergy training. In addition, most of those in the age group that are currently the best candidates for lay evangelist selection and training have only a few years of primary school education.

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<sup>10</sup>Interview with The Rt. Rev. Jesse Kimau, 5 June 2001.

<sup>11</sup>Interview with The Rt. Rev. Jesse Kimau, 5 June 2001.

In light of the ecclesiastical academic requirements, issues of a call to ministry have not been adequately or fairly evaluated for potential Maasai ministers and evangelists.<sup>12</sup> In the understanding of those laboring in the PCEA Maasai churches of this study, a call signifies a sincere personal conviction, through prayer, reflection, and counsel that one is being led into the practice of ministry by God. In addition, this call is validated by the local congregation's acceptance of his or her leadership. If, as Victor Babajide Cole, director of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology in Kenya writes, "One of the critical issues facing the church in Africa today is a dearth of leadership,"<sup>13</sup> then finding and selecting potential leaders is a paramount task. Adhering to western criteria of evaluating readiness for ministry and further study are not viable alternatives for Maasai people. The current practices for official selection of Maasai church leaders for PCEA Maasai churches does not take into account issues of call nor does it consider cultural parameters for leadership.

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<sup>12</sup>A specific example occurring during the course of this case study emerged and provides anecdotal evidence that this is a current issue. PRA Leadership Team member, Benson Kurraru, reported that God was calling him to train for and become a pastor. At that time, Kurraru was serving as a volunteer evangelist for the PCEA *Oldanyati* (O3) congregation. The congregation enthusiastically confirmed his call and their willingness to have him as their leader. When Kurraru's request was processed through the Kirk Session to the Presbytery level, it was rejected because he had only completed eight years of school (standard eight). Kurraru reported that an appeal to the PCEA Nairobi headquarters also failed. After a time of reflection and prayer, Kurraru said he changed denominational affiliation to the AIC. He stated that there were many issues regarding the PCEA's approach to Maasai ministry involved in his decision, the issues of leadership selection being one of them. Kurraru stated that he felt the AIC was much more aware of the needs of Maasai people. Kurraru is now in training at the AIC Bible College in *Narok* and will be ordained as a minister to serve the *Oretiti* congregation and larger Maasai region in evangelism.

<sup>13</sup>Victor Cole, "The Training of Leaders for the Ministry: Implications for Theological Education," *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1992), 33.

Edgar Elliston, missionary among the Maasai in Tanzania before becoming a professor at Fuller School of World Mission in California,<sup>14</sup> illustrates the differences in leader selection with an inverted pyramid of levels in which those leadership positions, in most demand, are at the top (Fig. 93).<sup>15</sup> In addition, this model's upside-down approach puts, at the top of the pyramid, those who are not usually counted as having valuable input for the Church while putting at the bottom, those who have traditionally had the power and control in the Church. Elliston states that he takes example from the servant ministry of Jesus in developing this model.

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<sup>14</sup>Elliston has recently joined the faculty at Hope International University in California where he serves as Vice President of Academic Affairs, [ejelliston@hiu.edu](mailto:ejelliston@hiu.edu). The articles quoted were written during his tenure at Fuller.

<sup>15</sup>Edgar Elliston, "Maasai Leadership Development: An Emerging Process," *East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 2 (1983), 28.

**A Model for Maasai Christian Leadership  
Servant-Based Leadership Paradigm**

**LEVEL 1** Non-literate, unpaid local leaders who serve  
in local congregations

**LEVEL 2** Literate unpaid local leaders who  
serve locally and witness outside

**LEVEL 3** Partially paid leaders of  
small churches or groups of  
churches, Std. 7 education,  
often licensed

**LEVEL 4** Paid, ordained,  
pastors of churches,  
Bible School  
Graduates

**LEVEL 5** Paid,  
National,  
International  
with BA

Fig. 93. Elliston's Model for Maasai Christian Leadership.

The data collected in the field work portion of this thesis reveals that there are many literate, unpaid, local Maasai leaders for the congregations in this study area. These leaders were selected, not because of academic standing, but by consideration of factors such as call, character, and community standing. As far as can be ascertained, these local leaders were selected by the local church in consultation with the area PCEA minister, Rev. Mparinkoi, but without input or acknowledgement of the regional Presbytery or PCEA national office.

An example of the effectiveness of Elliston's *Level 2* leader may be drawn from *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* areas. An interview with Josphat Nagirro,



leader of the *Olasiti* (I4) congregation, detailed the work of the *enkomono loo tomon are* (the fellowship of the twelve).<sup>16</sup> The *enkomono loo tomon are* consists of approximately twelve Maasai lay leaders whose lives are marked by at least four characteristics: 1) deep, personal faith in and devotion to Jesus Christ, 2) a lifestyle exemplifying Godly characteristics, 3) a zeal for reaching out to Maasai people who have not yet heard and received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and 4) and confirmation from the community of Christians in their home area that they have observed these things in the person on a day-to-day basis. These Maasai, all PCEA members coming from all three mission areas represented in this study, meet together monthly for fellowship, mutual accountability, Bible study, worship, and planning.

Josphat excitedly told of the work they had undertaken and the plans this group had for the future. Because there is little support for Maasai evangelism available, this group has their own infrastructure for raising funds and sending out evangelists. They regularly send out a pair of their group to remote Maasai regions in order to share the Christian message. The selection of those who go on these outreaches results from rotations among the group, availability, and prayer. In order to finance the mission of the selected pair, the group gives money to this common cause. Some in the group sell an animal from their herd, others donate funds from the proceeds of small businesses, while others solicit donations from the broader Christian community. Josphat reported that he and another man had traveled to Tanzania for a highly successful, two-month evangelistic campaign. When converts were won, it was reported, they were introduced to the evangelist of the nearest local Christian church. If there were a number of converts in one particular village,

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<sup>16</sup>Interview with Josphat Nagirro, 10 June 2001 at his home situated on the *Ngong Hills*.

Josphat and his partner stayed for an extended period to give basic Christian instruction. The effectiveness of the Christian leaders from the *ekomono loo tonon are (fellowship of the twelve)* distinguishes both their grass roots organization and their manner of selecting leaders.<sup>17</sup>

From his experiences in Africa among the Tanzanian Maasai, Elliston writes of the effectiveness of appropriate church leaders,

Ole Kutenkala is the most influential leader of the *Ildamat* section of the Maasai. He has guided Maasai evangelists and missionaries to where virtually every village has a significant number of believers. While he has never been either to a Bible College or seminary, he and several other older Maasai leaders over the past fifteen years have led in the establishment of more than 150 new congregations in four or five denominations. Churches in this Maasai movement toward Christ can not afford undergraduate Bible School training for its leaders much less graduate programs.<sup>18</sup>

The example of Ellison's experience with these local Maasai shows that when leadership is appropriately selected and empowered, the needs for ministry in that local area are more successfully met. When the values of the PCEA with regard to church leadership selection more closely reflect those of the people with whom they work, there will be a significant increase in the number of capable and called servants willing and able to serve the church. The example also shows that the task of discovering appropriate and effective ways to help the church train ministers and lay leaders within the context in which they will ultimately function is a critical challenge for African theological institutions and denominations.

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<sup>17</sup>Josphat related the importance of Acts 2:42 as a guiding vision statement for this group. See also: 1 Timothy 3:1-13 regarding Biblical leadership qualifications.

<sup>18</sup>Edgar Elliston, *Developing Leaders at a Distance: Contextualizing Leadership Development* (1998), 2, Internet: [http://aaron.fuller.edu/~elliston/access/developing\\_leaders.txt](http://aaron.fuller.edu/~elliston/access/developing_leaders.txt), Accessed 29 October 1999.

### *Appropriate Training*

The Maasai Christians in the areas of this study, especially those with potential for church leadership, have not readily fit into traditional patterns of theological education in the PCEA resulting in very few leaders receiving training. Pastor Stephen Mparinkoi believes that the training of leaders to work within the already established Maasai churches and to assist in evangelism is the most important task to be considered at this time:

The most important thing is to train our leaders, so they can go and train others. We have not had any training programs since the ones you did many years ago. I cannot take care of all these churches alone. I need trained men and women to lead and expand their churches.<sup>19</sup>

This study has clearly demonstrated that those who are currently working as worship leaders and evangelists in the PCEA Maasai churches in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas have had little training. The PCEA systems currently in place to offer training for Maasai church leaders do not take into consideration the diverse and unique cultural and contextual situation of these Maasai people.

Traditional approaches to theological education have been unable to supply PCEA Maasai churches with sufficient numbers of trained leadership. With the exploding growth of the church in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the exclusive use of current residential seminary models for training will not keep up with, much less address, the huge backlog of need for ministers at the local level, serving in local congregations. The Theological Education by Extension (TEE) movement has tried to address this need for equipping local leadership by developing alternative

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<sup>19</sup>Interview with Pastor Stephen Mparinkoi at his home in *Najile*, 26 May 2001.

systems of training.<sup>20</sup> As the focus of this thesis is not to plumb the depths of Theological Education by Extension, in the briefest of terms, however, a few points in regard to TEE are helpful in the topic of appropriate training of Maasai Christian leadership.

When considering the economic situation in many of these predominately Maasai areas needing pastoral leadership, it is evident that traditional, residential methods of theological education and leadership training represent an inordinate and unmanageable expense for ministerial training. Also, some proponents of TEE have argued that typical residential training promotes a western pattern of education and ministry since most teachers, including nationals, have been western-trained in methods of teaching and learning. Another point highlighted by TEE advocates is that the required movement of students from their home areas to the location of the school takes them out of context of their life and ministry and often they are unable to go back. Again, in traditional systems, only a select few can attend the training offered, often only those who have formal education, those with money, and those who can leave their home for an extended period. These factors severely limit the pool of candidates available in Maasai areas for theological education. Proponents of TEE believe that patterns of teaching, such as rote memory and exam, ensure

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<sup>20</sup>In the context of this thesis, the breadth and depth of the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) movement cannot be fully discussed. For further information see the following TEE source books: Ralph Covell and Peter Wagner, *An Extension Seminary Primer* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1971) and Ross Kinsler, *Ministry by the People: Theological Education by Extension* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983) and Ralph Winter, ed., *Theological Education By Extension* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1969). For a more detailed analysis of African TEE programs see: Jonathan Hogarth, Kiranga Gatimu and David Barrett, *Theological Education in Context: 100 Extension Programmes in Contemporary Africa* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1983).

students would parrot back information for evaluation, but do not seem effective in assisting conceptual knowledge. It is argued that traditional theological education methods produced many leaders who taught their own congregations by lecture, were often dogmatic and dictatorial, and were threatened by questions and discussion in the local church.

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educational theoretician, offers a simple analysis of traditional theological education as he observed it in Latin America, which he notes is based on North America and the west. A teacher, who is regarded as the ultimate source of knowledge, pours selected information into the empty and submissive minds of students who hold it for use in the future. Because of the powerful influence of the teacher, a student tends to abandon natural interests, culture, and independent thinking, and becomes a servant of the dominant social class, culture, and economic system.<sup>21</sup>

In response to the need for more appropriate educational methods, the Theological Education by Extension movement upheld the ideal of a flexible system of training that could be molded to each country's unique culture and need. It was a decentralized system which essentially meant that everyone did not have to come together at one certain place to receive instruction. Because of this, learning took place at the level of each individual student and teachers were able to interact and teach many more students than in the limited space and enrollment of formal institutions. Owning a building was not needed, as TEE could operate out of a home, a church, or an office, often rent free. TEE, it was argued, greatly assisted the manner in which people were selected as it appealed to folks who had nothing to

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<sup>21</sup>Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970).



gain from the program other than being trained for Christian service. Subsequently, people from all areas were able to take up TEE without abandoning their lives and families, thus providing a more culturally appropriate means for training. Leaders could be trained from within a local community to minister to that same local community. And finally, quality of instruction through sequenced subject learning, discussion rather than lecture, independent study, and integrated life experience all made for an exciting and innovated approach to theological training. TEE, which began in Latin America in 1963, became a radical challenge to traditional institutions of theological training. The impact of TEE formed the nucleus for a paradigm shift in models of theological education for many seminaries worldwide. Futurist Joel Barker, drawing from the earlier writings of social scientist Thomas Kuhn and theologian Hans Kung, has popularized the concept of paradigm for the business world. He warns that even new paradigms are not immune from becoming rigid, inflexible institutions themselves and thus susceptible to becoming like dinosaurs in rapidly changing environments.<sup>22</sup> The Theological Education by Extension movement is in danger of losing its original vision and philosophy for two primary reasons: 1) the undue emphasis on the use of programmed texts and 2) the overzealous perceived need to have TEE recognized as accredited.

The concept of putting TEE students through a set course curriculum of programmed texts is strikingly similar to the traditional seminary approach which the original TEE advocates were against. One of the dangers into which a highly programmed TEE can fall is the tendency to be so program focused that dependence on and direction from God is omitted from the equation. One TEE leader writes,

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<sup>22</sup>Joel Barker, *Future Edge* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1992).

“The key to innovation in theological education is regular spiritual renewal.”<sup>23</sup>

Because the TEE movement has relied so heavily on programmed texts and programmed learning, it has lost its ability to be flexible to the needs of the communities which it came to serve. When TEE leaders set up programs which require students to complete certain previously produced courses in order to gain a certificate or graduate, it can be argued that TEE is little different than the traditional model it hoped to replace.

Secondly, from the onset TEE was an idea whose originators believed had to be proven successful. The initial profusion of statistics and figures on enrollment, costs and programs served to validate the movement's far reaching impact. It was hoped that having TEE programs officially accredited through academic consortiums would further validate TEE. On the one hand, both the facts and figures and the acceptance of TEE by various area accrediting associations have been successful in validating TEE as a legitimate educational program, but on the other hand, one could argue that these efforts have served only to reinforce whether TEE is as good as residential, formal theological education.

Over the past years, these two factors have contributed to the institutionalization of TEE. What may be observed now is a desire to reclaim some of the innovative flexibility of the original concepts of TEE. There are already a few leading institutions offering internationally recognized academic degrees who are distancing themselves from the TEE name by using the phraseology, distance

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<sup>23</sup>Richard Hart, “The Future of Theological Education by Extension,” *Evangelical Review of Theology*, vol. 4, no. 1 (January 1990), 31.

education.<sup>24</sup> The TEE nomenclature may or may not change the world over. What is changing is view of leadership roles in the Church and how men and women are prepared to be ministry leaders in their unique contexts. For example, the role of a pastor is different from the role of a theological school instructor and so training and competency will vary. The professor will be more knowledgeable about an important theologian or church history or early Semitic languages and the pastor will be more knowledgeable about preaching or evangelism or worship. Both perform valid and needed functions within the Church.

An emerging trend in worship leadership training emphasizing the work of the Holy Spirit dates back to the beginning of the TEE movement when Rob and Meggs McLaughlin were pioneer Presbyterian (USA) missionaries in the 1960's among the Nuer people of Sudan and Ethiopia. During his first encounters with these then illiterate, nomadic people, McLaughlin noticed that lay leaders were effectively leading in their local churches with little or no training. As he reflected on how this could possibly occur, he brings to issue the role of the Holy Spirit, a point rarely discussed in academic study of the topic of leadership development:

And where did the lay leaders come from? The means through which they came to know Christ are known in most cases. But the imperative to be where they are, and to teach as they are teaching can only be traced to the Holy Spirit himself. It is His presence in the life of the leader and in the lives of the members of the worshipping community that has created all the distinctive characteristics...the 'something else in addition,' the 'unique factor,' the someone

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<sup>24</sup>There seems to be a shift in the nomenclature used to describe TEE as well as techniques employed for its delivery. There are at least four seminaries pioneering this push to relate current language and technology with off-site theological training. Their web sites are: Vancouver School of Theology: <http://www.vst.ubc.ca>, Fuller Theological Seminary: <http://www.fuller.edu>, Reformed Theological Seminary: <http://www.rtsvirtual.org>, Theological Education by Extension College of South Africa: <http://www.tee.co.za.default.htm>.

responsible for the 'church,' in these otherwise incongruous circumstances.<sup>25</sup>

The Pentecostal movement has emphasized from its onset that "church leadership, both lay and ordained, should be based less on academic credentials than on experience of the Spirit, proven leadership qualities, dedicated service over time, and genuine popular support in the community of faith."<sup>26</sup> Pentecostals have developed an enormous interest and involvement in TEE because of its emphasis on the gifts given by the Holy Spirit. These programs emphasize the vital need for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of church leaders. Neuza Itioka explains,

If Christian missionaries are to be effective in these cultures...our preaching and teaching cannot only include the rational and intellectual. It must go beyond, to deal with the spiritual powers....The rational, intellectual approach we have used for so long brings only new information, a new way of thinking. What we need to reach people who coexist daily with the supernatural is the powerful presence of the risen Christ.<sup>27</sup>

With the rapid development of the younger churches, worship leadership training paradigms, such as TEE, with a serious emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit, a strong Biblical basis, and a flexible methodology can have a significant role in training indigenous leaders for these churches.

In spite of its global success, TEE has had a limited impact on Maasai Christianity as expressed in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). While many PCEA leaders have been trained through TEE in the past, it is reported that

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<sup>25</sup>Robb McLaughlin, "Training Nomads," *Extension Seminary*, no. 2 (1972), 2-3.

<sup>26</sup>Ross Kinsler, "The Viability of Theological Education by Extension Today," *Ministerial Formation*, no. 85 (April 1999), 8.

<sup>27</sup>Neuza Itioka, "Recovering the Biblical Worldview for Effective Mission" in Gerald Anderson, James Phillips and Robert Coote, eds., *Mission in the 90's* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans and OMSC, 1991), 36.

only two Maasai have been through this TEE program going on to ordination as PCEA pastors. A missionary among the Maasai has suggested that this low training rate may be more related to tribal conflicts with PCEA leadership than to reception of the model of TEE by Maasai people.<sup>28</sup> TEE was introduced by the PCEA in 1983 with the production of the programmed text, "Introduction to the New Testament."<sup>29</sup> This course was based on the classic, Kinsler-TEE philosophy and model utilizing daily home study, weekly group gatherings, and community ministry involvement. When students completed each course, they received a certificate of completion. If the entire series of courses were completed, and the student was deemed a worthy ministerial candidate, the denomination would consider further training and possible ordination. The prerequisite of completing primary school in order to enroll in the PCEA's TEE program proved to be a handicap for literate Maasai leaders who had little formal education.

After examining the situation in East Africa, Kinsler muses, "Even if the material resources were available, it is evident that Western-style professional and academic training would not be appropriate for most of Kenya's indigenous church leadership."<sup>30</sup> This remark is certainly applicable to the situation found in the Maasai PCEA churches considered in this study. The general life philosophy of a person living in a non-modern, nomadic, pastoral herding world is radically different from that of a person living in a modern, urban, institutionalized one. A blanket

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<sup>28</sup>E-interview with Rev. Timothy Fairman (February 2000), TFairman@maf.org.

<sup>29</sup>*Introduction to the New Testament* (Kenya: PCEA Pastoral Institute, 1983).

<sup>30</sup>Ross Kinsler, "Ecumenical Perspectives and Theological Education by Extension," *Seminario de Extension*, no. 3 (1983), 2.



transfer of theological education systems from one world to the other is not effective, especially those systems which are developed in, for use in, the west. This fact is evident in the Methodist Church of Nigeria where the use of the British system for training and examining ministers and the inability to create new structures to respond to the growing need for new clergy led to a stagnation of ministry among the rural populations.<sup>31</sup> The previous model of Maasai leadership selection and development offered by Elliston is an attempt to move away from status-based, education-based, power-based ministry leadership training while acknowledging the inter-connectedness of all people throughout the range of service.<sup>32</sup>

This study shows a diverse range of life situations in which Maasai people find themselves at the beginning of a new century—from those living a traditional, pastoral life little changed in 100 years, to those pressing into areas of modern animal husbandry, agri-business, and education. Yet, in all the 21<sup>st</sup> century variations of a changing Maasai culture, the unwavering certainty binding Maasai people together is their rich common heritage. The challenge for the PCEA and other Christian ministries is to authentically value Maasai cultural heritage to the extent of seeking models from within to shape new ministry paradigms.

When considering a worship leadership training program for Maasai Christians, the discovery of indigenous cultural models and their application must be considered. Are there traditional cultural models in Maasai culture that can be used as a basis for construction of a worship leader training program? There are several

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<sup>31</sup>Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Leadership Development in the Methodist Church Nigeria (1842-1962)* (Ibadan: Sefer, 1992), 30.

<sup>32</sup>See Fig. 93, "Elliston's Model for Maasai Christian Leadership."

previously listed practices that can assist in dealing with this question: delegation, passage, fellowship gathering. First, the formation of a delegation has a specific purpose. For example, the *olamal loo murran* (delegation of warriors) sees a warrior group going from village to village in order to assert their prowess, enjoy the benefits due to them in terms of honor, food, and sexual favors, and to check on the news of the region in their protective charge. An *olamal loo payiani* (delegation of elders) comes together for a variety of purposes one of which is the discussion of views and the making of decisions for the best of the community. The concept of *olamal* (delegation) could be utilized in Maasai Christian leadership training as a cultural connection indicating the setting apart for a specific purpose of a selected group of church leaders.<sup>33</sup> The cultural status of a delegation would also offer credibility and interest in the message. Second, the concept of passage is pervasive in Maasai culture. Although there is no one word that expresses the entirety of the concept, when speaking about this idea many Maasai use the phrase *imbaa e nkishon* (events of life). From birth to death, Maasai pass through stages of life marked by passage events.<sup>34</sup> In between such events, men, women, and children learn from *enkisoma* (lessons) the lessons of life through instruction and practice. Just as the events of traditional Maasai life are specially marked and carry various degrees of authority and respect, so passages in the Christian journey could be observed and validated. Thirdly, the Maasai concept of *enkomono* (fellowship gathering) often

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<sup>33</sup>It would be extremely important to use the correct word in reference to delegation in the context of Christian training of leaders as there are also delegations with purposes such as war (*empikas*, pl: *impikasi*) or punishment (*olkishuroto*, pl: *ilkishurot*). A peaceful delegation is rendered *olamal*, pl: *ilamala*.

<sup>34</sup>See Mol, *Language and Culture*, 246-248, for a detailed table outlining the major ages, stages, and ceremonies which mark the passages men and women traverse in their lifetime.

occurs traditionally when men or women wish to gather for a specific purpose, often to pray to *Enkai*. Etymologically, *enkomono* has connections to corporate gathering for prayer.<sup>35</sup>

As can be seen in the following example, the concept of *enkomono* may be used in Christian training events to mark spiritual purpose and community involvement. For Maasai, significant teaching and learning is not to be found by going away to learn and coming back to practice, but rather it is manifest in the community and its world. Maasai concepts such as *enkomono*, a purposeful fellowship gathering, and *enkisoma*, a lesson or teaching, are most often found referring to events which occur within the context of the community itself. For instance, a gathering (*enkomono*) to listen to an elder tell the news and his perspective of it would often contain a lesson (*enkisoma*) for his juniors and children and often a prayer to *Enkai*. Because of the importance placed on interactive discussion (*inosu lomon*, eating the news) and learning from within the community's own context, a non-western educational approach could be readily adapted for usage in training Maasai Christian worship leaders.

For the Maasai, the methodologies such as those found in the Theological Education by Extension movement, and, more importantly, within their own cultural practices, are much more aligned to their context than that of a traditional, residential seminary. There may be opportunities for select few Maasai Christian leaders to attend theological schools. Although out of the norm, many Maasai are proud of those from their clan who do pursue higher education, some even studying

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<sup>35</sup>Mol, *Maa Dictionary*, 126 shows the connection of *enkomono* with prayer. *Esayiata* is a specific prayer petition while *enkomono* can be considered a spiritual gathering or fellowship or a gathering together for prayers.

abroad. Even so, the need for leadership at the local church level dictates an increased emphasis on training leaders on their own turf and in their own terms. Because of the communal nature of Maasai society, the base of leadership in PCEA Maasai churches must come from within, not from the outside.<sup>36</sup> The work of the church among the Maasai is a different and difficult ministry and requires someone who is willing to take on a servant-leader role within that community. Models for the development of a Christian worship leader base must involve Maasai people throughout the planning and implementation process so that in all respects a distinctly Maasai program emerges. Nevertheless, the distinctives of Christianity must be grappled with by these same Maasai as Dick France comments:

African Christianity...must be truly African, speaking to actual African concerns with an authentic African voice. But...it must also be truly Christian, and that means that what it applies to the question of Africa must be the biblical revelation.<sup>37</sup>

In 1987-1989, a series of seminars for Maasai lay leaders of the PCEA's *Olooseos* parish were held. In order to develop this program, I worked with Maasai PCEA leaders to survey the leadership needs of a vast area and to define goals. Together, listing resources available, limiting factors, and cultural distinctives, we designed a program called the *Enkomono loo Evangelists* (Fellowship of the Evangelists).

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<sup>36</sup>I have witnessed situations of African, non-Maasai pastors posted to Maasai parishes that have not worked out because of cultural conflicts. While there were no questions regarding the minister's academic training, there were concerns over their ability to work in the Maasai communities where they had been posted. In each case, these pastors did not remain at their post for more than a year.

<sup>37</sup>Dick France, "Critical Needs of the Fast-Growing African Churches," *Evangelical Missionary Quarterly*, vol. 14 (July 1978), 143.

There were several unique characteristics of the *Enkomono loo Evangelists*.

First was the name. As noted previously, an *enkomono* may be translated as worship or gathering or prayer for the purpose of traditional religious ceremony or rite. However, *enkomono* means much more than this. It is a purposeful communal gathering. At an *enkomono* important matters are discussed and decided, vital news is shared with the community leaders, meals are eaten together in harmony. In reference to Christianity, *enkomono* is the closest traditional concept the Maasai have to the Biblical concept of *kononia*. This was verified in discussion with Maasai Church leaders as they confirmed the concepts of *enkomono* in the program. When announcement of the name occurred, there was excitement, enthusiasm, and anticipation indicative of a culturally appropriate name for the training program.

Secondly, the format of the *Enkomono loo Evangelists* was unique. In the classic, Kinsler-TEE model, there are three elements: individual study, group interaction, and ministry involvement. A particular program can adjust, by stressing or minimizing the components, to fit TEE to its particular cultural context. This is what was done with the *Enkomono loo Evangelists*. The following model (Fig. 93) for Maasai Christian Leader Training has all three elements included, but stresses the *enkomono* aspect. Traditional Maasai culture is, by nature, communal. Setting up this program as a group event for teaching/learning emphasized solidarity with the cultural patterns of the community. This was further confirmed by allowing each village area to choose the ones they would send for training.

This model was developed for Maasai leadership training utilizing the key elements of classic TEE and putting them into a model more likely to be understood by Maasai people. Instead of a split-rail fence, common to Latin American contexts,



I utilize the African image of a three-rock fire.<sup>38</sup> In this model, the three stones equally support the cooking pot, thus visually demonstrating the concept of interaction between the primary components of Theological Education by Extension: group study/reflection seminars (*enkomono*), personal study and lessons (*enkisoma*), practice of ministry (*asiai lo kanisa*). It should be noted that for Maasai context, the *enkomono* aspect of the program was greatly stressed beyond the other two elements in order to reflect the cultural importance of learning within the community. The aluminum cooking pot (Swahili: *sufuria*) is representative of the church (*kanisa*), strong and practically indestructible. Within the pot is a special soup mixture (*orpul*) the Maasai eat for health and strength that represents the Word of God (*ororei lenkai*) and the gathering of the people of God (*iltungenuk lenkai, lalashera o enkanasera*), for songs of praise (*osinkolio te meisisi*), and for worship and prayers (*enkomono we nchula*). The fire that warms the stones and heats the pot is a symbol of the fire of the Holy Spirit (*oltau sinyati*). This model, because of its cultural connection, provides an understandable portrayal of Christian leadership training to Maasai church leaders.

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<sup>38</sup>Traditionally, this set up of fire stones and often times a large aluminum cooking pot is the gift of the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law.

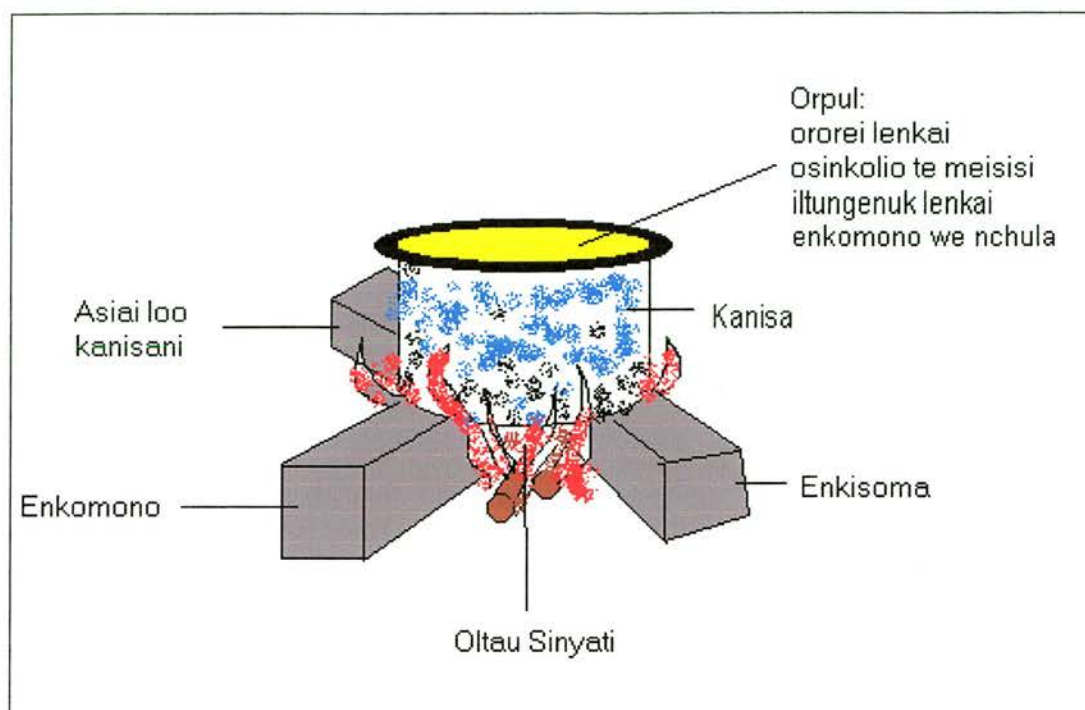


Fig. 94. Model for Maasai Christian Leadership Training (Strang).

Finally, the content of the *Enkomono loo Evangelists* was unique. Because a majority of the participants could not read, the training event did not rely on written materials. There were dramas, singing and storytelling. Those who were asked to give teaching (*enkisoma*, lesson) were carefully chosen based upon their personal integrity within the church and community at large and their understanding of Maasai culture. The format included extended periods for eating and talking. Part of learning in Maasai culture is discussion over meals (*inosu lomon*, eating the news) and sharing of views through oral discourse. These prolonged times of simply sitting around talking with one another proved to be an important component of the overall learning. Ross Kinsler alludes to the importance of these type of theological parlays that allow local Christians to be interpreters of Christ within their contexts when he writes:

Because theologians, Africans as well as others, think of theology in terms of erudite written treatises, they may fail to recognize the vast wealth of oral theology that accompanies the extraordinarily vital contemporary African Christian movement.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, the spontaneous singing that arose during these meal times demonstrated the fellowship nature of the *enkomono* concept.

The *Enkomono loo Evangelists* was scheduled three times a year for a two-year period. Over 60 lay leaders attended each seminar which were all held at the *Olooseos* (O1) Parish Church of the Good Shepherd. Follow-up visitation with the lay leaders was conducted between seminars at the ministry locations of the participants by a Maasai pastor and the writer. At the conclusion of the seminar series, the PCEA officially designated 16 of these leaders as evangelists. This program was successful because of the interaction of the Maasai community at the initial inception of the event and the appropriation of the correct cultural analogy, *enkomono*. While understanding the three interdependent components, the *Enkomono loo Evangelists*, because of cultural considerations, emphasized the group gathering over the individual study and ministry practice components. The *Enkomono loo Evangelists* demonstrates that non-traditional Christian leadership training can be effective in Maasai culture.

The need for Maasai leaders in the PCEA, and many other churches, is real and urgent. Both the reality and urgency of this situation was made clear to me throughout this field work case study. Most especially during my family's 2002 visit to Maasai friends near the village of *Saikeri* and the Reverend Stephen Mparinkoi. Stephen expressed with great passion the revelation of the presence of

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<sup>39</sup>Ross Kinsler, "Theology by the People" (CA: Southern California Extension Center, 1982), 9.

Jesus Christ that had recently come over village after village in the outreach areas. Lay leaders, some of whom had been trained years ago at the *Enkomono loo Evangelists*, had established many new PCEA churches in the *Injashat* and *Ewuaso* areas. Pastor Stephen's joy and excitement was evident, yet his concern over training lay worship leaders and evangelists for these and other new congregations was a real burden to his heart. This made twenty-four congregations over which he had charge. As he spoke of several more church plants already beginning to take root, he spoke of his inability to minister to so many. His question to us was, "How could more leaders be trained to help?"<sup>40</sup>

Traditional methods of training Christian leaders will not work for the Maasai churches in Pastor Stephen's parish. Those lay people already in leadership cannot leave for a training course as they must help nurture the many new churches and tend to their own family needs. These leaders cannot afford residential training; they cannot leave their families and herds; they are not interested in the kind of training being offered that seems to them irrelevant and insensitive to their situation. Taking training to these lay leaders through a training program which affirms the distinctives of Maasai culture is a viable means for meeting the great need for Christian leadership development in the Maasai church.

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<sup>40</sup>Interview with the Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi near *Saikeri*, 20 July 2002.

### *Appropriate Clerical and Lay Worship Leader Dress*

This study has made abundantly clear the fact that both PCEA clergy and lay worship leaders follow western conventions of dress when leading services of Christian worship. In order for Christian worship in PCEA Maasai congregation be more representative of the surrounding culture, clergy and lay worship leaders could adopt some distinct aspects of Maasai tradition for incorporation into their dress. Without causing undue dissention within the ranks of the PCEA, the simple inclusion of the beautiful *esiaai isaen* (bead work), even on the background of a western or clerical shirt, would visually convey solidarity with the Maasai people. Already, men can be seen wearing beaded belts with their trousers and beaded watch straps to secure time pieces. Discussions of crafting a beaded cross and stole for me were carried on with great excitement. Master crafters, Elizabeth Pulei and Paulina Sakuda, made the clergy stole and the beaded cross pictured on the following page (Figs. 95 and 96).<sup>41</sup> These items were received with enthusiasm and high accolades in many of the churches of the study area. Subsequently, many crosses are now crafted and worn by Maasai leaders and laity alike. Not only can the stole be used as clergy dress, it can also be used as a parmout for the pulpit or communion table. The indigenous artwork of Maasai people can be used effectively for the augmentation of worship by the addition of both originality and beauty to the vista of Christian worship.

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<sup>41</sup>Strang, *Photographic Archive*, BeadedMaasaiCross(2002), MaasaiBeadedStoleandRobe (1989).



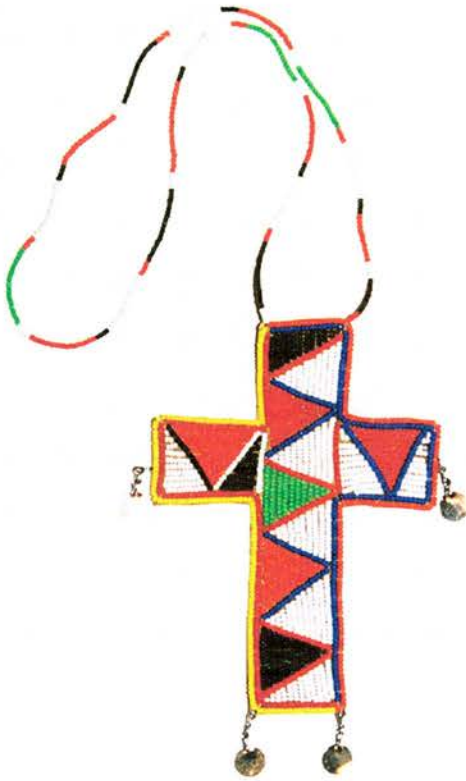


Fig. 95. Beaded Cross (2003).



Fig. 96. Beaded Clerical Stole (2003).

#### *Appropriate Liturgy, Music, and Dance*

Again, this study has shown that the liturgy and music employed by most PCEA Maasai congregations is a blanket replica of western styles, though there is clearly an increasing use of indigenous hymnody. While this study in no way suggests the abandonment of liturgical practice or the exclusion of the hymnody that is now part of the local Christian culture, the case has been made for including traditional expressions of celebration in consideration of the unique cultural distinctiveness of Maasai people. When the basic life concerns of a people are not reflected in the liturgy or artistic expressions offered to God in Christian worship, then that service of worship is in danger of becoming a “noisy gong or a clanging

cymbal.”<sup>42</sup> Suggestions such as those made by Donovan are more sensitive to this and find a connection with the heart and mind of Maasai people.<sup>43</sup>

Music and dance are part and parcel of the heart and mind of African culture.<sup>44</sup> “Music mirrors the soul of the African, and is an essential part of his inmost being; it has the power to liberate, and it is in the music and the dance that the African can best be himself.”<sup>45</sup> This is especially true of the Maasai as, traditionally, their joyous singing and rhythmic dance are part of both their daily life and special ceremonies. The link between African traditional religion and music and dance is often carried forward into the practices of Christian worship in many African churches.<sup>46</sup> This has not been the case for PCEA Maasai churches. Although this study confirms that new praise songs (*indungetta*) are beginning to find their way into Maasai Christian worship, much of the music in the PCEA

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<sup>42</sup>1 Corinthians 13:1.

<sup>43</sup>Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered*, 79.

<sup>44</sup>Bruno Nettl, *Music in Primitive Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 6-7. For further insight on Ethnomusicology and its relationship to religious practice see: Kay Kaufman Shelemay, ed., *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions, and Scope* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), and Bruno Nettl, *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1964), and Helen Myers, *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992).

<sup>45</sup>Henry Weman, *African Music and the Church in Africa* (Uppsala: Appelbergs Boktryckeri, 1960), 20.

<sup>46</sup>See a discussion of the traditional *fante* lyric used in Methodist church services in Ghana in Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa* (London: Oxford, 1970), 185-186. Also the *izibongo* (praise-poems) to Isaiah Shembe, founder of the *Ibandla lamaNazaretha* in Elisabeth Gunner, “New Wine in Old Bottles: Imagery in the *Izibongo* of the Zulu Zionist Prophet, Isaiah Shembe” in Veronika Gorog-Karady, *Genres, Forms, Meanings: Essays in African Oral Literature* (Oxford: JASO, 1983), 107. Also Jack Thompson, “Shembe Mismanaged? A Study of Varying Interpretations of the *Ibandla LamaNazaretha*,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, vol. 70, no. 3 (Autumn 1988), 194.

worship services among the Maasai still mostly consists of 19<sup>th</sup> century western hymnody and bodily movement is often discouraged.

Incorporating indigenous music and dance into PCEA Maasai Christian worship needs to be seriously considered and encouraged. Paul Van Thiel comments,

Dancing plays a prominent part not only in the everyday life of many African peoples but also in primitive religious rites. In different parts of the African continent singing involves bodily movements and gestures. To many musicians singing is not conceivable without simultaneous dancing. As the dance is an integral part of African cultures, one may not leave unconsidered the possibility that it could form part of liturgical gestures and actions.<sup>47</sup>

Christian ethnomusicologist, Roberta King, argues that music can and should be an essential ingredient in the training of leaders for the church and should be automatically included into every training program.<sup>48</sup> Training worship leaders in the practical skills of leading and utilizing music unique to their cultural context helps communicate the Gospel and fosters a spirit of worship that is authentic to the people. The use of exuberant music and lively dance for worship is Biblically grounded.<sup>49</sup> The use of indigenous African musical forms and related dance in Christian worship allows the local community to claim the unique God-given identity of that particular worshipping body.

Traditionally, Maasai people sing and dance. Donovan writes of it, "If the rhythm is supplied by males, it is the girls and women who supply the melody, and

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<sup>47</sup>Paul Van Thiel, "Spontaneous Creativity and African Sacred Music," *African Ecclesia Review (AFER)*, vol. 27, no. 2 (1985), 84.

<sup>48</sup>Roberta King, "The Role of Music in Theological Education," *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1990), 35-41.

<sup>49</sup>Psalm 149:3; 150; 30:11. See also: David dancing before the Lord in 2 Samuel 6:14.

much more, to the Masai singing and dancing. They are the heart of it, and the living treasury of the repertoire of Masai music.”<sup>50</sup> The Maasai have several indigenous musical instruments: *oltuala* (1) *oltuala* (2) and *emowuo*. The *oltuala* is a one-inch black iron ankle bell which is sewn on a leather anklet and worn by warriors and young men at ceremonial dances. The other type of *oltuala* is a small (approximately 3 inch) metal bell. The *emowuo* is a horn made from an animal horn which is played by warriors when they go on a hunt, raid or prior to a special dance. It is also used in the circumcision ceremony for boys where it is played in a different manner than that used by the warriors. Although I have never witnessed the use of these instruments in Maasai Christian worship, this study does confirm that *kayambas* (rhythm instruments) along with the skin drums are now used in many PCEA Maasai churches to accompany the choir and congregational singing.

While enthusiastic and ecstatic music and dance are integral part of Maasai life, this is not the widespread practice in the PCEA Maasai worship services. The Presbyterian Church in Ghana has allowed traditional music and dance in their services of worship and have experienced enthusiastic response.<sup>51</sup> There is an African Presbyterian precedent for the PCEA to consider.

The Maasai have a wonderful musical heritage that can be employed for Christian worship. Maasai composers need to be encouraged to write Christian worship songs based on Maasai traditional melodies and forms. For instance, the *alamal* songs of the warriors in which they praise themselves for their glorious deeds and prowess can be altered to reflect praise to *Enkai*. In addition to the *kayamba* and

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<sup>50</sup>Donovon, *Christianity Rediscovered*, 19.

<sup>51</sup>Andrew Wilson-Dickson, *The Story of Christian Music* (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1992), 173.

the skin drum, other traditional Maasai instruments could also be accepted in Christian worship. When Maasai Christian music is introduced into worship, the church officials must be willing to allow the distinctive, rhythmic, and even ecstatic dancing of the Maasai people as a symbiotic part of the melody itself. If these cultural distinctives are allowed, they can enhance the entire community's experience of Christian worship.

### Conclusion

The PCEA Maasai Worship Case Study of this thesis breaks new ground in the scope of knowledge about PCEA Maasai worship practice and worship leadership in the *Olchoronyori*, *Injashat*, and *Ewuaso* outreach areas. The accumulation and analysis of the various data from convergent sources of field observation, survey, interview, photography, and music has shown clearly that the distinctive cultural uniqueness of Maasai people has been largely ignored in the propagation of PCEA churches and the preparation of clergy and lay worship leaders for these congregations. Furthermore, this denominational position fosters a spirit of discontent among participants with visible signposts now readily observable that show a leaning toward a separatist church.

The Maasai church manifested in PCEA congregations within this study area is in transition. From a mission church formed on a western paradigm, to a church led by indigenous Africans, these Maasai congregations are now beginning to emerge as a distinct communal body of Christ. The caution to this body and any church in such a process is the realization that cultural expression is both a blessing of God's unique gift to a people, but also a factor that can separate and destroy unity in the church. A church "cannot be completely adjusted, indigenised,



contextualised, accommodated, adapted, re-symbolized, acculturated, inculturated and incarnated to culture. The Gospel displays its authentic power in its refusal to be completely indigenised. A perfect indigenisation is an idolatry of culture.”<sup>52</sup>

When cultural expression becomes the benchmark for evaluating the Church’s true expression among a people, then culture itself, rather than the revelation of Christ, becomes the defining factor. Considering the theological position that holds a fallen view of the state of all humanity, then there are deficiencies within every culture that need God’s touch of regeneration and renewal. Anita Stauffer concludes,

Christ transcends and transforms all things human, including ourselves and our cultures. Interaction between worship and culture influences both. In the final analysis, we are called not to conform to the world, but to be transformed ourselves (Romans 12:2), and, in turn, to help transform the world. All of creation, including all earthly cultures, need this redemption, this transformation.<sup>53</sup>

The Holy Spirit in Scripture reveals essential truths of the Christian faith to believers of all nations in all situations in the manner of God’s own choosing, but many ecclesiastical additions are culturally formed. Even confessional standards are written in response to specific cultural, geographically, ethnographically specific situations and may have variation when crossing culture. New confessions, new liturgies, new music, new ways of worship, and new methods of training developed by African theologians, African clergy, and African laity are desperately needed to

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<sup>52</sup>Kosuke Koyama, “The Tradition and Indigenisation,” *Asia Journal of Theology*, vol. 7, no.1 (1993), 7.

<sup>53</sup>Anita Stauffer, “Worship: Ecumenical Core and Cultural Context,” *Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1996), 22.

assist congregations to become a reflection of God's unique manifestation of His presence among a particular people as the Church.

While this study reveals that the distinct cultural uniqueness of Maasai people has not been a factor seriously considered in the formation of PCEA Maasai worship and worship leader training, there are indications that some changes in worship perceptions and practices within the congregations studied are occurring. One example comes from a worship service in the *Ewuaso Kedong* where The Rev. Stephen Mparinkoi was leading the service and I was to deliver the message.<sup>54</sup> The news had been spread that both Pastor Stephen and I would be there that Sunday. There were over 200 in attendance with a number of the lay evangelists I helped train in the *enkomono loo evangelists* (fellowship of the evangelists) some years prior. At one point in the service, Pastor Stephen called the evangelists to come forward and bring me greetings from their villages. They all came forward one by one, all remaining before the congregation. One man began to sing a song of praise to *Enkai* (God) using the traditional forms of music he had learned as a warrior. As he did, the other evangelists joined in the chorus and slowly began to move their bodies in the unique Maasai rhythm. As soon as the congregation saw what was going on, they all sprang to their feet yelling encouragement to the evangelists. The song continued, building in its volume and intensity as did the dancing. This went on for at least twenty minutes.

As this song of praise to *Enkai* (God) reached a high point, Pastor Stephen walked in front of the men who were gathered at the front of the church facing the congregation and began to jump in the manner of a Maasai warrior. When he did

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<sup>54</sup> Author's observations at PCEA *Najile* (E1) worship, July 1999.

this, there was an immediate enthusiastic response from all the people as he jumped higher and higher in his ecstatic praise to *Enkai*. Each evangelist followed his lead until all had completed their jumping. Then, while still singing, they all walked to their seats, swaying and dancing as they went. Pastor Stephen turned to me and said with a big smile, “We Maasai know how to worship God!” Indeed they do.

After the service, over massive plates of rice and roasted goat, Pastor Stephen and I spoke at length about the worship service and the possibility of further incorporation of elements of traditional Maasai culture. Stephen related that they had only planned to briefly greet me in the service, but what had evolved was a genuine movement of the Holy Spirit freeing the evangelists to worship God in ways that were familiar to them. Other evangelists joined in our discussion and all concurred that they would like to see more of their Maasai culture reflected in Christian worship. This case study shows that they have begun this process.

Long ago, the Apostle Paul felt the burden of God’s call to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul established churches in much of the then known world by teaching core Christian beliefs to local leaders and then, being assured that the presence of the Holy Spirit was among them, he left them to form a church according to what was best for their people. Paul entrusted these newly established churches to God, helping and encouraging where needed, but moving on. These early churches developed with their own unique imprint on worship and the practice of the Christian faith. There were conflicts, meetings, and much prayer to help resolve them along the way. In the final analysis, the early Christian church thrived and spread the Gospel to the extent of their world.

In a similar manner, pioneer missionaries came to East Africa to tell the Maasai people about *olaitoriani Yesu* (the Lord Jesus). The roots of the Gospel are well embedded in East African people and the Holy Spirit fires the hearts of believers. Maasai Christians long for freedom to worship the *Enkai* of endless Serengeti sunsets, who crafts sovereign glory on each beaded strand of life—sitting in counsel with elders, watching over naked children bounding through the tall grasses, dancing with ochred-covered warriors, and singing with the strong voices of women. *Meisisi Enkai!* (Praise God!) God has greater plans for the Church in Africa, and anywhere else, than any human could ever imagine. Denominations, organizations, clergy, evangelists, lay leaders, and believers must trust God’s providence over all of creation committing to *Enkai* all acts of worship and types of ministry programs. When the revelation of God through the presence of the Holy Spirit is made manifest among a people, the distinctive beauty of their created order is revealed in worship for the Creator. Claiming cultural identity in PCEA Maasai worship is affirming the differences of people and their unique human distinctiveness as gifts of God brought back to God in the act of Christian worship. In being receptive to culturally sensitive worship practice and open to the movement of the Holy Spirit, Christian worship among members of PCEA Maasai churches can be more authentically Maasai. As this occurs, Maasai Christians in the PCEA will be able, with the Psalmist and believers from all ages and nations to “sing to the Lord a new song” (Psalm 98:1).

## APPENDIX ONE

## COMPACT DISC RESOURCE: CONTENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The compact disc is located in a protective pouch attached to the back cover of the thesis. To access the information contained on this disc, insert the disc into a multi-media capable computer. Utilizing an explorer-type program (i.e. *windows explorer*), select the appropriate drive letter corresponding to the disc and view the contents.

There are four main file folders into which specific photographs and music files reside. The main file folders and brief descriptions thereof follow:

## File One: ChurchData&amp;Photos

Within this file are sub folders for each of the thirty-five congregations in the study. These folders are designated as indicated in the thesis text. For example, E10-Eluaai, contains the photographs made by the field observer along with a document summarizing some of the key worship survey findings for that church.

## File Two: StrangPhotographicArchive

This file contains numerous scanned images related to the research topic taken from the extensive photographic collection of the author. A text document is also in this file with specific details of the photographs included.

## File Three: MaasaiScans(historic)

This file contains scanned images from various sources depicting Maasai people and others as they relate to the thesis topic. A text document is also in this file giving specific details of the sources of each of these photographs.

## File Four: Multi-Media

This file has several music files from both traditional Maasai culture and Maasai Christian worship. A text file gives details of the situation of each of the recordings.



## APPENDIX TWO

## MAASAI STORIES OF ORIGIN

*The Origin of the Maasai*

Recorded by Fred Foy Strang: 27 June 1982, Olosho-oibor

In the beginning, all the Maasai lived together in a giant crater surrounded by steep escarpments. A long drought came to this land and caused famine, death, and discouragement. One day the elders noticed that birds were carrying green grass to their nests. They met and decided to send out warriors to discover the origin of the grass. The warriors, after a rugged climb, finally ascended the escarpment. At the top they found a green fertile land very unlike their dusty crater. They explored the new land, gathering green grass and fruits, and returned to their people.

The people praised them upon their return. The elders met and decided to construct a ladder to climb the treacherous escarpment. After the ladder was built, the people with their cattle and their belongings started the climb. When half of the people had reached safety, the ladder collapsed from the strain and threw the other half back into the crater. The elders met again and decided to leave those stranded behind because going back would jeopardize those already saved. Many years later, the people left behind escaped from the crater, but they remained a different people from the original group. The first group was known as the Maasai.

*The Maasai and Their Cattle*

Recorded by Fred Foy Strang: 5 July 1982, *Kimuka*

In the beginning an elephant, a serpent, and a Dorobo all lived together on the earth. The Dorobo asked the serpent, "Why do I itch when you breathe on me?" The serpent didn't answer, so the Dorobo became angry and killed it. Later, the elephant asked the Dorobo where the serpent was; the Dorobo said he didn't know, but the elephant guessed and she was sad.

Many days later the elephant gave birth and then went away to eat. When she returned, she drank from a pool near the Dorobo's house. The Dorobo was very angry at the elephant for dirtying his water, so he shot her with his arrow. The baby elephant saw its dead mother and ran away. In the bush the elephant met a Maasai warrior. They both went back to the Dorobo's house to avenge the killing. During the night God told the Dorobo to go to a specific place the next day to receive a message. The Maasai heard this, but the Dorobo, sleeping heavily, did not. The Maasai went to the spot, and there God told him to find a calf, slaughter it, and tie the meat up in the hide. After this, he was to build a fire and put the bundle of meat on it. God told the Maasai to shut himself up in his house and not to be startled or come out even if he heard a noise as loud as thunder.

So the Maasai shut himself up inside the house. God then let down a strip of hide into the middle of the meat on the fire, and for many hours cows came down the hide into the boma. Because the boma became so full of cattle, they pressed against the house. The noises frightened the Maasai and he opened the door to see what was happening. At that moment, God cut the hide so that no more cows could come because the Maasai had disobeyed. Ever since that day, the Dorobo hasn't had any cattle. The Maasai say, "In the beginning God gave us all the cattle in the world."

APPENDIX THREE  
WORSHIP OBSERVATION REPORT FORM

## WORSHIP OBSERVATION REPORT

(333)

Observer Name:

Church Name:

Date of Observation:

Was there a church building?

Briefly describe church building:

Time service began:

Time service ended:

Names of Worship leaders for service:

Total attendance (men, women, children, choir, leaders):

What tribal groups were present in worship?

What tribal group had the most number present?

Was there a choir?

How many people were in the choir?

In what language did the choir sing?

What did the choir wear?

Did the choir use any instruments?

If yes, which ones?

Did you observe the choir, clapping, dancing, jumping, swaying... (please describe)

What was the response of the congregation to the choir's music? (check and circle)

☐ no observable response

☐ facial expressions of approval? or disapproval?

☐ vocal and facial expressions of approval? or disapproval?

☐ very active approval by singing, clapping, dancing, along with choir

☐ other (describe)

What songs were sung by everyone? List--

In what languages were these songs sung?

Did the people use hymnbooks/songbooks or sing by memory?

About how many hymnbooks/songbooks did you count in use?

Did you see anyone with a Bible?

About how many Bibles did you see?

What language(s) did the worship leader(s) use?

Describe the responses of the people during the prayers and preaching--

How did the service end?

After the service, what did the people do?

List any other observations or descriptions you wish here:

#### PHOTOGRAPH CHECKLIST

- ☐ Yourself (during training)
- ☐ Church building (3-4 views)
- ☐ General area around the church
- ☐ Table in the front of the church (use flash)
- ☐ Church worship leaders (list names--left to right --)
  
- ☐ Choir (inside use flash)
- ☐ Instruments used by choir (inside use flash)
- ☐ People inside the church (use flash)
- ☐ People outside the church



## APPENDIX 4

## WORSHIP SURVEY (MAASAI)

1. Enkarna e Kanisa:

2. Ntarikini:

3. Larin asho olporrol:

4. A Olee ashu Enkitok:      A Olee      Enkitok

5. Kebaa erishata niewo ena anisa?

\_\_\_ mebore olari obo

\_\_\_ 1-3

\_\_\_ 4-7

\_\_\_ 7-10

\_\_\_ aitogiroyie ilarin tomon

6. Kaa ene kunono enkomono we nchola tena anisa ?

\_\_\_ anyor ena anisa oleng

\_\_\_ sidai ena anisa

\_\_\_ me oleng (onusu)

\_\_\_ mesidai

\_\_\_ manyor inaikonono enkomono tena anisa

7. Kalo kuak lol Maasai etai te ena anisa?

\_\_\_ pooki

\_\_\_ kumok

\_\_\_ kuti

\_\_\_ kuti oleng

\_\_\_ meetai

8. Ilakuno teninchop ilkarash o masaa tena enisa?

\_\_\_ kalakuno oleng

\_\_\_ adim ashopo tenayeu

\_\_\_ me oleng (onusu)

\_\_\_ malakuno

\_\_\_ malakuno oleng

9. Iyeu neetai mbaa olkuak lol Maasai tena enisa?

\_\_\_ kayieu neetai kumok

\_\_\_ kayieu

\_\_\_ meta kasi

\_\_\_ mayieu

\_\_\_ mayieu pie

10. Kakua sinkoliotin inyor, iloombukui anaa indungetta?

\_\_\_ iloo mbukkui

\_\_\_ kanyor pooki

\_\_\_ indungetta

11. Iyata kulei baa niyieu neasai tenkomono?

## APPENDIX FIVE

## WORSHIP SURVEY (SWAHILI)

**SURVEY QUESTIONS (Swahili)**  
(to be asked of 10 people at the Church you are observing)

(339)

1. Jina La Kanisa:

2. Tarehe ya leo:

3. Umri au rika:

4. Mume au Mke:

Mume

Mke

5. Umeshiriki kwa Kanisa hili kwa mda gani?

\_\_\_ sijafikisha mwaka tangu nianze kushiriki

\_\_\_ mwaka 1-3

\_\_\_ miaka 4-7

\_\_\_ miaka 7-10

\_\_\_ zaidi ya miaka 10

6. Tafadhali niambie kama unatosheka na ibada.

\_\_\_ nina tosheka kabisa na kujawa na furaha ninapo abudu hapa

\_\_\_ natosheka lakini sio kabisa

\_\_\_ nusu nusu

\_\_\_ sitosheki

\_\_\_ sitendi

7. Je kanisa hili lina ruhusu desturi yeyote ya Kimaasai katika ibada?

\_\_\_ yoti

\_\_\_ mengi

\_\_\_ hali jalishi

\_\_\_ chache

\_\_\_ hukuna



## SURVEY QUESTIONS (Swahili)

(340)

(to be asked of 10 people at the Church you are observing)

8. Je unasikia huru kuja kanisa hili ukiwa umevaa mashuka?

☐ niko huru sana sana

☐ niko huru

☐ naweza kuvaa mashuka nikitaka

☐ siko huru

☐ haiwezekani mtu havai mashuka kanisani

9. Unataka kuelewa na mambo ya desturi za kimaasai kwa hili kanisa?

☐ zote

☐ nyingi

☐ hai jalishi

☐ chache

☐ hakuna

10. Je unajambo lingine unataka kufanya kwa ibada?

APPENDIX SIX  
WORSHIP SURVEY (ENGLISH)

**SURVEY QUESTIONS (English)**  
(to be asked of 10 people at the Church you are observing)

1. Name of Church:

2. Date of Survey:

3. Age or Age Group:

4. Male or Female:

Male

Female

5. How long have you come to this church?

☐ less than 1 year

☐ 1-3 years

☐ 4-7 years

☐ 7-10 years

☐ more than 10 years

6. Are you satisfied /happy with the worship when you come to this church?

☐ I like it very much.

☐ I like it.

☐ neither like nor dislike--in the middle

☐ I do not like it.

☐ I am very unsatisfied with worship at this church.

7. Does this church have Maasai traditions in worship?

☐ all

☐ many

☐ some

☐ few

☐ none

8. Do you feel free/comfortable to wear traditional Maasai clothes and beads at this church?

- ☐ very free/comfortable
- ☐ free/comfortable
- ☐ neither free nor restricted
- ☐ not free/uncomfortable
- ☐ very restricted/very uncomfortable

9. Do you want there to be elements of Maasai culture/traditions in worship at this church?

- ☐ I want it very much.
- ☐ I want it.
- ☐ It doesn't matter.
- ☐ I don't want it.
- ☐ I don't want it at all.

10. Do you prefer songs from the hymnbook or praise choruses?

- ☐ hymnbook songs
- ☐ I like both
- ☐ praise choruses

11. Are there other things you want occur in worship?

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